

JAY NORDLINGER:
THE NAMESAKE WARS

RAMESH PONNURU:
PERSUASION VS. POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

NATIONAL REVIEW



CAGE MATCH

THE GOP'S INTERNAL FIGHT

Jeremy Carl • Eliana Johnson • Henry Olsen



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Women In War

As an Army infantry officer with some combat experience, I wholeheartedly agree with David French ("Social Justice at War," October 5) that arbitrarily declaring that women will serve alongside men in all combat roles is reckless and morally dubious. The brotherhood and camaraderie of a fighting unit is the intangible, immeasurable element of warfare that our civilian leaders cannot bring themselves to begin to understand. I have seen women's presence in pseudo-combat roles degrade that esprit de corps (through no fault of their own) simply due to human nature. In a combat environment, this is an unforgivable risk for the "reward" of someone's perception of equality.

That being said, I have the unique experience of working with my wife—also in the Army, and in my infantry battalion. She serves in a support role but nonetheless quite literally runs laps around many infantrymen in our unit. She recently competed in a physical-fitness assessment (push-ups, sit-ups, five-mile run, and twelve-mile ruck), placing eighth out of over 500 infantrymen. The scores were based on raw data, i.e., there were no scaled scores based on gender. Needless to say, she performs far above the "weakest men."

*First Lieutenant Jon Broderick
Fort Bragg, N.C.*

I'll Be Hornswoggled!



NATIONAL REVIEW really stooped low with the October 19 cover. That characterization was simply shameful. Not even Thomas Nast's lampooning of Boss Tweed reached such depths. Such an insult to Yosemite Sam is unforgivable.

*Don Culver
Edgewood, Ky.*

CORRECTION

"The Road to Better Bridges" (Jay Weiser, November 2, 2015) stated that, at the time of publication, construction had not yet begun on the Bayonne Bridge in New Jersey. In fact, construction began in May 2013; although it suffered a two-year setback, the bridge is expected to open in mid 2019.

Letters may be submitted by e-mail to letters@nationalreview.com.



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Text

■ Trump is wrong: Cruz is a natural-born citizen. But at least Trump is consistent about wanting to stop foreigners from taking jobs from low-skilled Americans.

■ “If Hillary thinks she can unleash her husband, with his terrible record of women abuse, while playing the women’s card on me, she’s wrong!” So tweeted Donald Trump. Another half-cocked Trumpism? After all, Bill Clinton’s popularity survived his Nineties sex scandals, and Hillary rode her reputation as wronged-but-loyal liberal wife to a political career of one’s own. Yet there is an entire generation for whom the Nineties are ancient history, and the Clinton scandals a name merely. They do not know what a nonstop horndog Bill was (long before Monica Lewinsky, the Clinton camp worried about “bimbo eruptions”). Changed attitudes toward male predation may also vex the Clintons. Will a culture that is encouraged to believe the victim give a second pass to Bill’s predations—and to Hillary’s collusion in his counterattacks against his accusers? *Bill: The Remake* may have some plot twists.

■ In December’s Democratic debate, Hillary Clinton claimed that ISIS was using Trump in recruiting videos. This was not in fact true. But in the new year, the Somali jihadist gang al-Shabaab put Trump in one of its propaganda pieces. Thank you, Madam Former Secretary, for giving terrorists ideas. But to step back from the campaign back-and-forth: Who cares what Muslim mass murderers profess to be angry at? They hate miniskirts, the Enlightenment, and the Resurrection of Christ, among ten thousand other things. Only submission to the imam du jour would allay their anger (though not the chances of being slaughtered by the acolytes of some hair’s-breadth-different imam). The rabbit hole of jihadists’ grievance is bottomless. The best way to address their complaints is to put the complainers out of their misery.

■ Trump finished 2015 with a Christmas present for Vladimir Putin. The aspiring American officeholder praised the Russian officeholder for his effectiveness while first denying and then minimizing his thuggery. “If he has killed reporters, I think that’s terrible,” Trump told one interviewer. But “he’s always denied that.” He told another interviewer, “I think our country does plenty of killing, also.” So either Putin is innocent, or we are equally guilty. Putin is no Stalin, but that is about the best that can be said of him. He stifles critics and steals billions. Sergei Magnitsky, a financial whistleblower, was tortured to death over the course of a year. Boris Nemtsov, an opposition politician, was shot in the back on a public bridge near the Kremlin. Putin did not administer the beatings or pull the trigger himself, but that’s not the way crime syndicates or despotisms work. Trump’s attitude toward the Russian is either faux-naïf, uninformed, or stupid. All are unsuitable in a commander-in-chief.



■ President Obama told a group of journalists that he had underestimated the public’s anxiety about the San Bernardino attack because he does not watch cable news. The implication is that the public is overreacting because CNN is, and that if the president is at fault, it is for not being sufficiently reassuring. Obama has never conceived of himself as a war president and is impatient with those who expect him to be one, even rhetorically. That the president thinks this way—about the public, and about his job—is what is not reassuring.

■ A few days after Christmas, Hillary Clinton was asked at a town hall in New Hampshire whether she would use the word “genocide” to describe the Islamic State’s campaign of destruction, killing, and enslavement directed against Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East. She said she would, “because we now have enough evidence.” She should share this evidence with the State Department she used to lead, which has so far been loath to use the term. Officially recognizing Christians as the victims of an ongoing genocide would be uncomfortable for President Obama—he prefers to downplay the religious aspect of ISIS’s ideology and would rather not intervene. In a Christmas message, he offered prayers for “God’s protection for persecuted Christians and those of other faiths.” His prayers are welcome; perhaps he might unite them with action in the new year.

■ About the \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill recently passed by Congress and signed into law, we have only one question:

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What were Republican leaders thinking? Republican voters are clearly anxious about large-scale immigration and frustrated that the federal government repeatedly demonstrates no interest in doing anything about it. Yet Republicans, in this bill, did not merely acquiesce to foolish immigration policies but actively advanced them, proposing and pushing through a temporary expansion of the H-2B visa program, needlessly quadrupling the issuance of visas to foreign workers for non-agricultural or temporary service jobs in 2016. Meanwhile, they fully funded the government's refugee-resettlement program despite reasonable national-security concerns, permitted federal grants to "sanctuary cities" without adding any qualifying conditions, and dismissed bipartisan efforts to reform the cronyism-riddled EB-5 visa program, under which foreigners can obtain a green card if they invest a certain amount in a business that creates or preserves ten jobs for U.S. citizens. Republican leaders should be attempting to halt illegal immigration, reduce legal immigration (especially from countries that pose a particular threat to American security), and figure out ways to assimilate immigrants who are already here and to reform the failed procedures by which we evaluate those who want to come. But this omnibus bill is a clear indication that House speaker Paul Ryan and Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell have other priorities.

■ As of this writing, a self-proclaimed "militia" is occupying a vacant federal building in the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, about 30 miles southeast of Burns, Ore. At the head of the dozen-strong band are ranchers Ammon and Ryan Bundy, the sons of Cliven, the Nevada rancher whose highly selective reading of the United States Constitution spurred a standoff with the Bureau of Land Management in the spring of 2014. Play-acting at revolution seems to be a Bundy-family pastime, and it will be an especially condemnable one if this situation devolves into bloodshed. But that seems unlikely; the Bundys have already promised to stand down if the community asks. Alas, their antics have overshadowed the cause of their protest: the federal government's decision to throw back into prison two local ranchers, Steven and Dwight Hammond, who (accidentally, the Hammonds maintain) burned 140 acres of federal land and caused a few hundred dollars in damage, were prosecuted under the federal Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and had already served reduced sentences. But the Hammonds have acquiesced to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and early in January returned to the low-security federal prison in San Pedro,



Ammon and Ryan Bundy

Calif. The Hammonds' plight is not unfamiliar to ranchers, who for decades have been squeezed off their property by a federal government more interested in grouse and tortoises than in cattlemen. The Hammonds seem to us to have a strong case. Vigorous protest is in order, but lawlessness is not.

■ Two years ago, President Obama was embarrassed when it was revealed that the National Security Agency had been spying heavily on German chancellor Angela Merkel and other American allies. He pledged to curtail such spying. Merkel, François Hollande of France, and other leaders would not be targeted. Left off the exempt list was the prime minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu. Now it has been revealed that the NSA has been spying on Netanyahu intimately and aggressively. Obama and other officials have been treated to the Israeli's communications with members of the U.S. Congress. What use have Obama & Co. made of that information? Here we enter a perilous legal realm. If the NSA were intercepting and disseminating a leftist leader's communications with members of Congress, Democrats would be screaming. They would be holding outraged hearings. Republicans should try to get to the bottom of the present case. Allies spy on allies, and rightly so. But what we know, and what Obama & Co. perhaps don't know, is that Israel, and Israel under Netanyahu, is an ally.

■ America's 400 richest people saw their tax rates go down substantially from 1992 through 2012, the *New York Times* reported in a front-page story, arguing that these citizens had managed to build a "private tax system" of arcane loopholes. The day after the story, the IRS put out a new report noting that tax rates for the top 400 sharply increased in 2013. What's driving these trends is the taxation of capital gains and dividends, which have become a higher percentage of these taxpayers' income over the years. Taxes on capital fell during the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations, then rose at the start of 2013. Because they rose, rich investors arranged to have higher capital incomes in 2012 and lower ones in 2013. Low tax rates on capital gains and dividends make sense because much of that investment income, unlike labor income, has already been taxed at the corporate level—a point that both the *Times* and the IRS obscure in their methodologies. Perhaps that's why most advanced countries have lower capital-gains rates than we do. But that's a trend piece that will never make the *Times's* front page.

■ The first trial of a Baltimore cop for charges arising from the death of Freddie Gray resulted in a hung jury and a mistrial. The prosecution of Officer William G. Porter should never have been brought: The evidence did not even create probable cause to make an arrest. Unfortunately, riots had made much of the city government intent on getting a guilty verdict. In that setting, it was an act of great courage for jurors to vote "not guilty." The prosecutor, Marilyn Mosby, argued that Gray died of preventable injuries: that police had intentionally failed to strap a seat-belt on him, knowing that he would therefore be injured, and then callously failed to get him medical attention when it was clear he needed it. But Gray was under the influence of narcotics and uncooperative, and Porter and other officers repeatedly checked on him, inquired about his condition, and at one point reasonably believed Gray was faking an injury. As soon as Porter realized that Gray was actually injured, he immediately called

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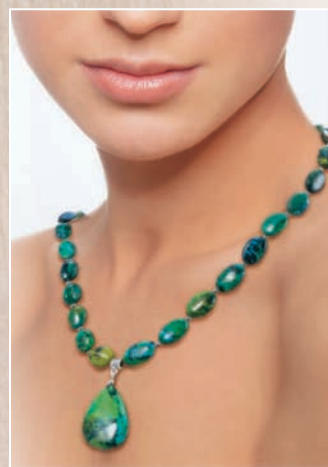
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for medical help and, in the meantime, attempted to provide aid. The verdict suggests that criminal-justice decisions are best made without input from rioters.

■ The facts of the Tamir Rice case are tragic. A police officer shot the twelve-year-old in a public park within approximately one second of exiting his squad car. Rice was armed only with a toy gun. A Cleveland grand jury may, however, have been right not to indict the officers on the scene. A dispatcher failed to tell those officers the key fact that a 911 caller had indicated that Rice's gun was likely fake. Without that knowledge, the officers treated Rice as an "active shooter" and fired when he reached toward his waistband rather than putting his hands in the air. Had they waited seconds longer, Rice would still be alive. The officers made a terrible mistake, but not necessarily one with a courtroom remedy.

■ Overall, American police appear to be responsible in their use of force. That's what the evidence of a year-long *Washington Post* study of police shootings suggests. Three-quarters of shootings are in clear self-defense or the defense of others. Less than 10 percent are of unarmed suspects, and less than 4 percent are of unarmed black suspects. Keeping in mind the African-American share of the violent-crime rate, police do not shoot African-American suspects at disproportionate rates. Law enforcement can do better—especially when dealing with fleeing suspects or the mentally ill—but the *Post* study confirms what conservatives have long understood: The police are still overwhelmingly a force for good in American society.

■ President Obama joined Jerry Seinfeld for an episode of *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*—oh, why even finish? After seven years we know the script: Hip president does pop-culture thing hiply. The storyline was fresh in January 2009 but quickly palled. And now? The punch line of the bit with Seinfeld came



at the top, before their ride even began, when the comic drove up to the White House and threw himself onto an Oval Office sofa, and the president at his desk said, "Got some stuff to do." Not really: All that remains for Obama is symbolism (the gun-sales executive order), foreign travel (Havana?), and kibitzing the election (is it more important to crush the Republican or to undermine Hillary? That, at least, will be interesting to watch). Obama has time to get coffee with comedians because his aging presidency, like Seinfeld's old show, is about nothing.

■ ConocoPhillips and NuStar made a bit of history when they loaded up a tanker with the first oil legally exported from the United States in 40 years, sending a shipload of crude from the Eagle Ford shale formation in Texas out of the Port of Corpus Christi, bound for a refinery in Switzerland. It marks the end of a long and stupid era: The ban on oil exports was a response to the Arab oil embargo of 1973 and is typical of anti-trade thinking: "We'll show those rascally foreigners a thing or two by . . . not selling our valuable products on world markets." For years, petroleum products have been the largest driver of U.S. trade deficits. Fracking changed the equation, with U.S. producers pulling so much oil out of the ground that the export ban was finally revealed as absurd. We aren't quite out of the woods of stupidity—oil exports still require federal approval—but permitting U.S. producers to export an extraordinarily valuable U.S. commodity to global markets is a step in the right direction, especially at a time of conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two petro-giants whose combined oil production just barely exceeds that of the No. 1 producer—which is, happily, the United States. Commodities are by their nature largely interchangeable, but there's something to be said for a world running on American oil rather than Islamofascist oil. If you agree, hug a fracker.

■ Puerto Rican agencies defaulted on bond payments due at the start of the year. Bad luck for the creditors—which could become bad luck for U.S. taxpayers if the island's economic woes lead to a bailout. One reason local economic mismanagement has generally not led to federal bailouts is that municipal debt is usually covered by bankruptcy law. For reasons lost to history, though, Congress decided not to let bankruptcy courts restructure municipal debt in Puerto Rico. That decision contributed to overlending to subdivisions of the island's government and now makes it hard to clean up the resulting mess. There is no ideal solution short of a time machine, but under the circumstances, Congress should change the bankruptcy law. If someone has to lose, it should be imprudent lenders rather than innocent taxpayers.

■ Kentucky's new governor, Republican Matt Bevin, did what his Democratic predecessor should have done: issue an executive order changing forms so that county clerks do not have to put their names on wedding licenses for same-sex couples. As a result of this accommodation, such couples can receive licenses without requiring clerks who object to same-sex marriage to violate their consciences. If this order had been in place a few months ago, Kim Davis would never have made the national news. Sometimes respecting the rights of conscience raises sticky issues; but many of the religious-liberty controversies of our day are entirely needless.

■ Bubba is a consistent disappointment. When there was a massacre in San Bernardino, actor and Hillary Clinton supporter Samuel L. Jackson said he "really wanted" the killer to be a "crazy white dude," but it turned out to be a jihadi Bonnie and Clyde of Pakistani extraction. No Bubba to be seen. When a mosque in Houston was burned on Christmas, the Left thought it finally had the white whale in its sights: Among other premature jactitations, *Salon* declared that the act was related to "escalating anti-Muslim violence" and named the suspect who had been arrested for the arson, Gary Moore of Houston. "Gary Moore of Houston" may


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COLOR	Silver or Beige

sound to the editors of *Salon* like a good Bubba, but it turns out that Moore isn't a crazy white dude at all, but a bearded man of color with a bit of a *zabiba* on his forehead from worshipping five times a day at the mosque in question. When it turned out that the suspect was a black Muslim instead of a white Christian, *Salon* scrubbed the story, and the Houston-mosque arson largely disappeared from the news. It shouldn't have: In the context of the spate of phony hate crimes (largely on college campuses) trumped up by progressive activists as a pretext for smearing their political rivals, this actual crime is of considerable interest. Facts matter, and the fact is that there is no anti-Muslim pogrom under way in the United States, however much the Left wishes there were.



■ Eugene Volokh, a legal scholar who blogs at the *Washington Post*, noticed a curious omission from a Department of Justice press release in December. The release announced that a Springfield, Mo., man and two accomplices had pled guilty to the 2011 crime of issuing threats to an Islamic center and defacing it with graffiti such as “Bash Back,” “Now is our time!” and “You bash us in Pakistan we bash here.” Not mentioned in the release or subsequent media reports was that the graffiti also included such messages as “Queer insurrection,” “Allah was gay,” “F*** straights,” and “It’s okay to be gay!”

The Obama administration is deeply concerned about fighting anti-Muslim backlash, but even more deeply concerned about keeping its coalition together.

■ New York City residents can now be fined \$250,000 for using the wrong pronouns when referring to transgender individuals. The assumption is that pronouns are wrong when they are appropriate to someone’s birth gender but contrary to his or her redefinition of him- or herself. Defenders of the new guideline issued last month by the city’s commission on human rights stress that the fines kick in only when the grammatical offense, as it’s perceived, is “willful, wanton, or malicious.” Who decides whether it’s one of those three adjectives? Don’t ask. Whoever it is, it’s not you—but wait. Is using “it” in reference to a person legal in New York?

■ Rahm Emanuel’s prospects, not sunny, darkened as an Illinois state representative proposed a bill to allow Chicago voters to recall their mayor. Since the obvious target is the incumbent, this looks like an ex post facto law, to say nothing of a bill of attainder. Who will weep for Rahm? Not we. He is probably the best that Chicagoans can hope for—a politician with national experience and an agenda marginally broader than ethnic-group plunder. Yet he is a Democratic hack—assistant to Bill Clinton, chief of staff for Barack Obama—with the manners of a bully. That was enough to win him office in the Windy City, but not immunity. Last year he only narrowly won reelection over a radical Hispanic activist, Jesús García. When a year-old dash-cam video of Laquan McDonald being fatally shot by police surfaced conveniently after Emanuel’s victory, his approval ratings collapsed. Attn: Detroit—Chicago is moving next door.

■ The execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr brought out into the open the rivalry that has been steadily accelerating between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shiite Iran. Regional supremacy is at stake. Both countries are in the hands of a self-selected elite determined to hold power whatever the cost, whatever the injustice. This has involved mutual subversion and terrorism, arming and financing fellow sectarians in the proxy wars under way in Syria and Yemen, as well as positioning the powder kegs awaiting explosion in Lebanon and Bahrain. Shiites in Saudi Arabia are a minority that feels discriminated against by the ruling Sunnis, and Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, himself a Shiite and a fire-brand preacher, took up their cause, clearly willing to pay for it with his life. The Iranian regime was bound to treat the judicial execution of so prominent a Shiite cleric as a declaration of war. The supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, promises “divine vengeance.” An official spokesman condemns the execution as “a medieval act of savagery,” although the Iranian regime is thought to have carried out over 700 executions in the last year alone. One mob set fire to the Saudi embassy in Tehran and another mob ransacked the Saudi consulate in Mashhad. The two countries have broken off diplomatic relations. Both the Saudis and the Iranians think we are tilting toward the latter, and it is having a radicalizing effect on both.

■ Iraqi security forces retook Ramadi in a significant victory over ISIS. U.S. general Sean MacFarland, who helped stoke the Sunni Awakening in 2006, worked to catalyze the best Iraqi forces and coordinate with American air power to recapture the capital of Anbar province. This is all welcome, although now Iraqi forces have to hold the city, and the bigger prize, Mosul, is probably beyond their reach. We should be doing more on the ground to assist the Iraqis. The twofold problem is that President Obama is reluctant to offer this additional assistance, and a politically weakened Iraqi prime minister Haider Al-Abadi, under pressure from Shia hard-liners, is now reluctant to accept it. We can hope for the best, but the campaign against ISIS will be a ramshackle, touch-and-go affair absent U.S. leadership and a comprehensive, adequately resourced plan for victory.

■ The British government released its long-awaited report on the Muslim Brotherhood. Stopping short of calling for a ban on the organization, the review nevertheless finds that the Brotherhood is a deliberately clandestine global movement; it is hostile to the West, and its countenancing of violence belies its claim to have renounced it. Brotherhood members, the report notes, have moved seamlessly from indoctrination in the group’s ideology to engagement in jihadist extremism. Moreover, Brotherhood members in the United Kingdom have been openly supportive of suicide bombings and other attacks in Israel by Hamas, the terrorist group that self-identifies as the Brotherhood’s Palestinian chapter. Prime Minister David Cameron further explained that “aspects of the Muslim Brotherhood’s ideology and activities therefore run counter to British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, equality, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.” Therefore, the government concludes that membership in, association with, or influence by the Brotherhood “should be considered as a possible indicator of extremism”; this warrants keeping the Brotherhood and its members “under review,” meaning heightened surveillance as well as stepped-up immi-

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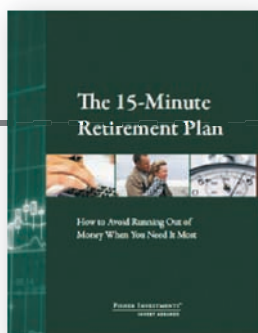
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gration restrictions and monitoring of Brotherhood-connected charities. At a minimum, the United States should follow the British lead.

■ Recep Tayyip Erdogan has already made the remarkable transition from prime minister to president of Turkey. When the voting failed to launch him on the road to becoming president for life, he ordered another round of it, and still his Justice and Development party does not have a majority large enough to give him plenary powers. Pondering how to overcome this snag, he revealed some inner thoughts at a press conference, saying that a presidential system can work perfectly: “There are already examples in the world and in history. You can see it when you look at Hitler’s Germany.” Of course he then claimed that his meaning had been distorted, but quite a number of Turks are calling him Führer, and, according to one Twitter commenter, “the difference is that Hitler was a bit shorter.”

■ Bullets struck a bus motoring down the road in Mandera County in northeast Kenya in December. The bus halted and about ten gunmen, thought to be with al-Shabaab, clambered aboard. They ordered the passengers, numbering more than 100, to separate themselves into Muslims and non-Muslims. The Muslims said no. During the confusion, some Muslim women gave some Christian women their hijabs, and others helped fellow passengers hide behind bags. “If you want to kill us, then kill us,” they told the terrorists, according to a passenger. “There are no Christians here,” they added—if ever there was an occasion for *taqiyya*, or permissible deception, this was it. A police official said that the attackers left when a passenger, improvising another lie, told them that a police escort was close behind. Two died and three were injured in the incident, but most escaped unharmed, thanks to the Mandera Heroes, as they have been dubbed on social media. “Righteous gentiles” we would call them, *mutatis mutandis*.

■ Police and security officials on three continents foiled New Year’s Eve terror plots in cities as far-flung as Ankara, Munich, Brussels, and Rochester, N.Y. In Munich, authorities evacuated two train stations after receiving “a very concrete tip” from U.S. and French intelligence sources. In Rochester, according to FBI informants, a man who aspired to join ISIS had bought supplies, including a machete, at a Walmart earlier that week but was arrested before he could carry out his plan to attack a restaurant on the big night. Details varied from city to city, but the underlying theme was constant: the alacrity and seriousness of public officials responsible for public safety. Theirs was the job not of devising and executing a broad, global strategy against global jihad but of taking quick, precise measures to protect civilians against specific, defined threats. By its nature, their work tends to go unnoticed unless a plot to blow things up or shoot people down escapes them. They are largely nameless, but they know who they are. They acted bravely and brilliantly. They have our gratitude.

■ Mastering the technology of a fusion weapon is not easy, and skepticism justifiably abounds that the impoverished, isolated regime in Pyongyang has actually made the leap from fission to potential megaton yields. But if North Korea’s claim of having

tested a hydrogen bomb holds up, then East Asia’s nuclear risk has gone up an order of magnitude. An H-bomb would obviously make North Korea an existential threat to South Korea and Japan, and a North Korea that has mastered the technology of intercontinental ballistic missiles is also a grave threat to the United States. These nations and their allies should begin planning accordingly. It is long past time to increase early-warning systems in the region, and for Washington to increase funding for ballistic-missile defenses at home and abroad. Additionally, the U.S. should declare that any North Korean ICBM that is loaded with a nuclear warhead and fueled for launch will be destroyed immediately, and back up that promise with an unambiguous display of military muscle. The Obama administration all but ignored Pyongyang during its time in office. The next president will not be able to do so.

■ Italy’s high court rejected a “wrongful birth” lawsuit, in which a couple sued doctors for not telling them that their child had Down syndrome while they still had time to procure an abortion. The court ruled, sensibly enough, that no child has a right not to be born and, so far as we can tell from English-language accounts, that parents cannot exercise that right on behalf of children who would supposedly be better off had they been killed. Bizarre as the lawsuit may sound, it would be quite at home in the courts of many U.S. states. If some parents think it reasonable to have buyer’s remorse about their children, it is only because the law has already blurred the line between human lives and mere things.

■ In Britain, the new Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, decided not to issue a traditional Christmas message. He had wished Muslims well at Eid, but Christmas is apparently not in the repertoire of New Labour. The Conservative leader, Prime Minister David Cameron, did indeed issue a Christmas message. Referring to his country’s armed forces, he said: “It is because they face danger that we have peace. And that is what we mark today as we celebrate the birth of God’s only son, Jesus Christ—the Prince of Peace. As a Christian country, we must remember what his birth represents: peace, mercy, goodwill, and, above all, hope. I believe that we should also reflect on the fact that it is because of these important religious roots and Christian values that Britain has been such a successful home to people of all faiths and none.” For decades, but especially since 9/11, this magazine has been calling for more civilizational confidence. In this little message, Cameron showed some.



British
prime minister
David Cameron

■ British astronauts are about as common as American cricket players. Timothy Peake, who reached the International Space Station in mid December, is only the second person sent into space from the U.K., not counting spaceflight tourists and Brits who flew for NASA. His mission, like that of all ISS astronauts, consists mainly of keeping the ISS going by performing maintenance and repairs, along with a few scientific experiments. At any rate, on Christmas Eve, Peake was excited to call the folks back home . . . until his “Hello, is this Planet Earth?” was received with befuddlement by a woman he didn’t know, at which point Peake realized that he had dialed the wrong number. It’s refreshing to learn that even as British high technology takes a large step forward, the spirit of Benny Hill lives on.

■ The French have been largely disarmed by their government, but that doesn’t mean they are entirely defenseless: A French farmer made the news in January when he caught a couple of thieves trying to boost his irrigation equipment. Having been repeatedly victimized by such thievery, the farmer defended his property with what was at hand, in this case a backhoe, which he used to reduce the thieves’ car to rubble. France being France, he was fined €2,400 for using “disproportionate” force. If backhoes are outlawed . . .

■ Until a jury of his peers decides otherwise, Bill Cosby is legally presumed not guilty of the charges of sexual assault, some going back decades, that now flock around him like the Furies. He certainly appears to be guilty, in which case Cosby will be remembered as a gross and compulsive abuser who forced himself on women, many of them young admirers smitten with his stature and drugged into unconsciousness. America is losing both a popular comedian—an easy-listening bridge between hipness and mass appeal—and an offstage advocate for pull-up-your-socks self-help. Cosby was a kind of black Benjamin Franklin, both as a jokester and as an advice-giver. The self-destruction of that persona is everyone’s loss.

■ The new *Star Wars* is out—No. 7—and it has excited comment of all types. Philosophical, cinematic, and breezy. Positive, negative, and neutral. One thing the movie does is affirm the centrality of our core stories—the ones that recur over the millennia, in our civilization. *Star Wars* has the Bible, of course. And Thermopylae. And King Arthur. And Wagner (or his Norse mythology). And more, surely. The *Star Wars* movies are an expression of our civilizational patrimony. This is a patrimony that we would be foolish, if not suicidal, to shun or even dilute. Are the *Star Wars* movies fun to watch? Sure, some of them, which is a bonus.

■ “Feminism was my religion,” says Alexandra Kimball. But when Kimball, a freelance writer, miscarried in her mid 30s, she was startled to discover that “feminism had nothing to say to me”: “The more I considered it, the more I became convinced that the silence around miscarriage was connected to feminism’s work around abortion. How could I grieve a thing that didn’t exist? If a fetus is not meaningfully alive, if it is just a collection of cells—the cornerstone claim of the pro-choice movement—what does it mean to miscarry one?” Kimball’s miscarriage and the months of a grief she could not explain form the subject of her powerful essay “Unpregnant: The

Silent, Secret Grief of Miscarriage,” published in December in Canada’s *Globe & Mail*. The essay is no anti-feminist screed, but reminds us that any ideology that insists on denying the truth will ultimately prove false to human experience.

■ Oregon State University is planning four racially segregated “social-justice retreats” for students and faculty. The “Racial Aikido” retreat seeks to empower “students of color at predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)” —no white kids allowed—while the “Examining White Identity in a Multicultural World” retreat is for self-identified low-melanin-level kids who want to focus on “white privilege” and “oppression in ourselves” in “both personal and institutional contexts.” There’s also a “Multi-racial Aikido” and an “Examining White Identity for Faculty and Staff” retreat just so all the bases are covered in the war against racism in that hotbed of hate: Corvallis, Ore.

■ Koko, a gorilla who over four-plus decades has learned to speak (in sign language) at roughly the level of a two-year-old human, has taped a video message to humanity: “I am gorilla, I am flowers, animals. I am Nature. Koko love man. Earth Koko love. But man stupid . . . stupid! Koko sorry, Koko cry. Time hurry. Fix Earth! Help Earth! Hurry! Protect Earth. Nature watches you. Thank you.” Admittedly, this is more coherent than the average climate rant at *Salon*, and while Koko doesn’t say whether she thinks the lack of verifiable enforcement mechanisms will impair the effectiveness of INDCs in the Paris agreement, presumably she will address that point in her next video. But did Koko write the message herself? A spokesman explains: “We presented her with a script . . . and allowed her to improvise during a series of brief daily video discussion sessions.” (When does a 300-pound gorilla ad lib? Anytime it wants to!) Moreover, “the result was edited from a number of separate takes, for brevity and continuity.” The sad thing is, they coach schoolkids the same way.

■ Jordyn Bihon, a senior at Derry Area High School in Derry, Pa., likes archery. For the high-school yearbook, she submitted a photo of herself holding a bow. No arrow, just a bow. A teacher called her mother, Lisa Bihon, to say they couldn’t run the image because the bow was a weapon. Lisa shot back: “That’s not a weapon. That’s her sport. That’s what she does. It’s her passion.” The teacher insisted, and the principal and school-district superintendent backed her up. Never mind the 2011 Derry yearbook, which includes a photo of . . . a girl holding a bow. And never mind that archery is taught in the school’s gym class. Does Derry have fencers interested in demonstrating their sport in the high-school yearbook? Javelin throwers, perhaps? We hope it does. And we hope they try.



■ When Meadowlark Lemon was a teenager in North Carolina just after World War II, basketball was a minor sport whose rules were still being worked out. The plodding 1940s game was far from today's nonstop highlight reel; with no shot clock, patience and positional play were stressed, and most players shot the ball with both feet on the ground, as jumpers were a recent and distrusted innovation. Lemon had other ideas; he set his sights on the Harlem Globetrotters, an all-black professional barnstorming team that emphasized a flashy style of play and, after the establishment of the NBA, was starting to include ever-larger amounts of clowning and acrobatics. Lemon signed with the Globetrotters in 1954, after a brief stay in college and a tour in the Army, and for 24 years was the team's ringmaster, with an unparalleled array of trick shots, snappy ball-handling, no-look passes, and sight gags. After leaving the Globetrotters in a late-1970s salary dispute, he formed his own comedy basketball troupe, and for the rest of his life he tirelessly promoted Christian virtues (eventually becoming an ordained minister) to audiences worldwide and encouraged young fans to work hard and avoid drugs and alcohol. Dead at 83. R.I.P.

GUNS

Obama's New Overreach

PRESIDENT OBAMA thrives on having an enemy. With his most recent executive decrees on gun control, he has calculated that having the National Rifle Association as a foil in the final year of his presidency is healthier for the body politic than pursuing measures that might actually curtail gun violence.

The president's actions aim primarily to rejigger licensing rules in such a way as to cause some casual sellers of firearms to fall within the federal definition of "firearms dealer" and thus oblige them to obtain federal dealers' licenses and to perform background checks before selling a gun. This is, of course, intended to target the Left's *bête noire*, the "gun-show loophole," which doesn't actually exist. The term generally refers to the fact that people who are not professionally engaged in the business of selling firearms, at gun shows or anywhere else, are not obliged to become licensed firearms dealers (FFLs) if, say, they sell a brother-in-law an old deer rifle for \$50—much as you need not become a licensed automobile dealer if you hang a "For Sale" sign in the window of your 1983 Honda Prelude.

It's likely that the president's action, for all the laudatory press it will earn, will not have much impact on criminals' acquisitions of guns. Unlicensed sales at gun shows are not a large source of firearms used in crimes; many gun shows keep FFL-holders on site to perform background checks; and online gun shops, which are licensed dealers, ship exclusively to other FFLs in order to secure legal

transfer. Many casual sellers do the same thing, because they have strong incentives to secure legal transfer of the firearms they sell. The proposal is largely behind the times.

We need hardly note, too, that the president's insistence that he is acting within preexisting statutory authority already appears dubious.

Legally and politically, the president has better options. While gun shows are not major sources of firearms used in crimes, straw buyers are. We already have strong laws against straw purchases, but they are barely enforced. President Obama has absolute power over the hiring and firing of U.S. attorneys, and he could, if he were so inclined, simply order them to start prosecuting straw-buyer cases in high-crime locales such as Chicago and Detroit—or dismiss recalcitrant prosecutors and replace them with those more committed to doing their jobs.

If the president's central concern is mass shootings (which, contrary to popular rhetoric, constitute only a tiny fraction of the gun violence in the United States), it's important to focus on getting treatment for people with severe mental illness, who carry out a significant proportion of these horrific attacks. While the president's executive order sets aside more federal funding for mental health, it won't make a difference unless it is focused on people with such afflictions (e.g., serious schizophrenics, not office managers with low-level depression). The bipartisan bill sponsored by Representative Tim Murphy (R., Pa.), currently stalled in Congress, would push the mental-health system toward addressing the severely mentally ill much more effectively.

But all of this is far too much detail for President Obama. He would rather fearmonger about gun shows and an omnipotent-seeming "gun lobby." In other words, seven years in, this president still prefers righteous indignation to right-headed policy.



An assortment of weapons at a gun expo in El Paso, Texas, on March 13, 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of NATIONAL REVIEW will appear in three weeks.

Choose Life Grow Young with HGH

From the landmark book *Grow Young with HGH* comes the most powerful, over-the-counter health supplement in the history of man. Human growth hormone was first discovered in 1920 and has long been thought by the medical community to be necessary only to stimulate the body to full adult size and therefore unnecessary past the age of 20. Recent studies, however, have overturned this notion completely, discovering instead that the natural decline of Human Growth Hormone (HGH), from ages 21 to 61 (the average age at which there is only a trace left in the body) and is the main reason why the the body ages and fails to regenerate itself to its 25 year-old biological age.

Like a picked flower cut from the source, we gradually wilt physically and mentally and become vulnerable to a host of degenerative diseases, that we simply weren't susceptible to in our early adult years.

Modern medical science now regards aging as a disease that is treatable and preventable and that "aging", the disease, is actually a compilation of various diseases and pathologies, from everything, like a rise in blood glucose and pressure to diabetes, skin wrinkling and so on. All of these aging symptoms can be stopped and rolled back by maintaining Growth Hormone levels in

the blood at the same levels HGH existed in the blood when we were 25 years old.

There is a receptor site in almost every cell in the human body for HGH, so its regenerative and healing effects are very comprehensive.

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The next big breakthrough was to come in 1997 when a group of doctors and scientists, developed an all-natural source product which would cause your own natural HGH to be released again and do all the remarkable things it did for you in your 20's. Now available to every adult for about the price of a coffee and donut a day.



GHR now available in America, just in time for the aging Baby Boomers and everyone else from age 30 to 90 who doesn't want to age rapidly but would rather stay young, beautiful and healthy all of the time.

The new HGH releasers are winning converts from the synthetic HGH users as well, since GHR is just as effective, is oral instead of self-injectable and is very affordable.

GHR is a natural releaser, has no known side effects, unlike the synthetic version and has no known drug interactions. Progressive doctors admit that this is the direction medicine is seeking to go, to get the body to heal itself instead of employing drugs. GHR is truly a revolutionary paradigm shift in medicine and, like any modern leap frog advance, many others will be left in the dust holding their limited, or useless drugs and remedies.

It is now thought that HGH is so comprehensive in its healing and regenerative powers that it is today, where the computer industry was twenty years ago, that it will displace so many prescription and non-prescription drugs and health remedies that it is staggering to think of.

The president of BIE Health Products stated in a recent interview, I've been waiting for these products since the 70's. We knew they would come, if only we could stay healthy and live long enough to see them! If you want to stay on top of your game, physically and mentally as you age, this product is a boon, especially for the highly skilled professionals who have made large investments in their education, and experience. Also with the failure of Congress to honor our seniors with pharmaceutical coverage policy, it's more important than ever to take pro-active steps to safeguard your health. Continued use of GHR will make a radical difference in your health, HGH is particularly helpful to the elderly who, given a choice, would rather stay independent in their own home, strong, healthy and alert enough to manage their own affairs, exercise and stay involved in their communities. Frank, age 85, walks two miles a day, plays golf, belongs to a dance club for seniors, had a girl friend again and doesn't need Viagra, passed his drivers test and is hardly ever home when we call - GHR delivers.

HGH is known to relieve symptoms of Asthma, Angina, Chronic Fatigue, Constipation, Lower back pain and Sciatica, Cataracts and Macular Degeneration, Menopause, Fibromyalgia, Regular and Diabetic Neuropathy, Hepatitis, helps Kidney Dialysis and Heart and Stroke recovery.

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Text



What Trump Sees

And the GOP establishment doesn't

BY JEREMY CARL

THE French writer Charles Péguy once said that “one must always say what one sees. Above all, which is more difficult, one must always see what one sees.”

While it may seem odd to begin an analysis of Donald Trump’s presidential candidacy with a reference to a French intellectual, it is, in this case, *à propos*. Because, with respect to Trump, the greatest challenge facing Republicans is not to say what they see, but to *see* what they see. And the failure of the GOP establishment (and even of many conservatives outside it) to see what they see—their blindness to the infuriated alienation of their middle- and working-class voters—explains a great deal about the Trump phenomenon.

Trump, despite all his vulgarity and boorishness, has, along with fellow anti-establishment candidates such as Ted Cruz and Ben Carson, given these voters a voice that has not recently been heard. The Beltway GOP believes its voters are having a temper tantrum. But it would be more accurate to say that they are responding with understandable anger to a party that has failed over several election cycles to address their legitimate fears and concerns.

This failure manifests itself not just in support for Trump, but in the fact that among those expressing a candidate preference in the most recent polling averages, 85 percent of likely GOP-presidential-primary voters support candidates who either have never held office or have come to power during or after the 2010 tea-party revolt. This despite the fact that out of 17 serious candidates who originally began the race for the Republican nomination, eleven did not fit that profile.

The failure to “see what one sees” has never been more apparent than during passage of the budget omnibus bill in December, pushed by Speaker Paul Ryan. Its provision on H-2B visas, which allowed for the import of tens of thousands of low-skilled foreign workers to fill jobs for which there are “labor shortages,” was a frontal assault on American workers, made for the sake of big business. The tone-deafness of such a move in the midst of the Trump surge was simply breathtaking.

Ryan may be many things, but he is not primarily a creature of K Street. In this particular moment, he is just a man who cannot see what he sees. Perhaps he could take a cue from Rich Lowry, the editor of these pages, who recently said, “The next time I hear a Republican strategist or a Republican politician say that there are

jobs that Americans won’t do, that person should be shot, he should be hanged, he should be wrapped in a carpet and thrown in the Potomac River.”

In many ways, the Trumpenproletariat (to use Jonah Goldberg’s felicitous term) is the inheritor of the constituency of Ross Perot—and, more recently, of Sarah Palin, the last person to inspire similar loathing among GOP donors and consultants.

As for the man himself, Trump is far more “crazy like a fox” than simply crazy. He is a master showman who, beneath all the bluster, is as calculating as any conventional politician. His effusions, even the most offensive of them, seem designed to move the Overton window—the range of politically acceptable discourse on any given issue—in precisely the way that benefits him. Nonetheless, despite Trump’s continued demonstrations of staying power, most journalists and GOP strategists are convinced, not without reason, that he will inevitably fade. While this may be true, it is also irrelevant to the GOP’s victory strategy. For the Trump supporters are exactly whom the GOP needs to bring into its coalition if it wants to win in 2016. It is reasonable to argue that Trump supporters are a constituency in demographic decline and that the way that Trump is pursuing them will hurt the party’s brand, but the GOP cannot win in 2016 without them. That’s not politics: That’s math.

Consider the typical Trump voter. According to a recent analysis in the *New York Times*, Trump’s “very best voters are self-identified Republicans who nonetheless are registered as Democrats.” In the least educated constituencies, Trump takes 37 percent of the GOP vote—compared with just 25 percent of those with the highest levels of education. He also—unsurprisingly, given his focus on immigration—does very well with white middle- and working-class voters whose economic insecurity derives in no small part from competition with immigrant labor. As NBC election analyst Chuck Todd recently noted, “Republicans don’t win general elections without Donald Trump’s voters. . . . We used to call them Reagan Democrats.”

To illustrate the necessity of these voters to the Republican coalition, we can look at the results of election-simulation models from *RealClearPolitics* (RCP) and the political-data site *fivethirtyeight.com*. These models allow users to plug in certain turnout and voting assumptions for various demographic groups and predict

ROMAN GENN

Mr. Carl is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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their effect on the race at the national and state levels.

In the RCP simulator, if a GOP candidate can win white voters at Reagan's 1984 vote-share percentage of 66 percent (i.e., bringing in the Reagan Democrats) and at George W. Bush's 2004 turnout levels (67 percent), and if African-American turnout returns to its pre-Obama level and partisan breakdown, the GOP could retake the presidency without winning a single Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or Arab vote. It's a staggering result. And if, as will certainly happen, the Republican nominee wins at least some significant number of minority votes, the party will not have to achieve Reagan percentages among whites to win. The converse is equally staggering: Assuming that white and black turnout and voting patterns stay the same as in 2012, even if the GOP won an unthinkable 53 percent of the non-black minority vote ("Hispanics" and "Asians and other"), the Democrats would win the presidency.

In fivethirtyeight.com's simulation, moving the turnout of non-college-educated whites halfway between their 2012 turnout and the (higher) 2012 turnout of college-educated-whites while bumping their party preference a few points toward the GOP—and assuming that black turnout and Democratic voting percentages return to their historic averages—gives the GOP an electoral landslide. Trump intuitively understands this; most of his rivals do not.

In short, while the Republican party almost certainly cannot retake the presidency in 2016 with Trump as its nominee, given his high negatives and poor head-to-head poll numbers against Hillary Clinton, it also cannot win without Trump's supporters. Any tactic that alienates them is a sure loser, no matter how many "emerging constituency" voters the party rallies under its banner. This is not to deny that the GOP should aggressively try to win all demographic groups, but simply to point out that any strategy, such as amnesty, that does so by alienating or discouraging working- and middle-class white voters will lead to certain defeat.

Among all the other candidates, only Ted Cruz—who has gone out of his way to avoid alienating Trump's supporters, while declining to embrace Trump's toxic rhetoric—seems to understand this. (It is no coincidence that Cruz has by far the best data operation of any candidate in the race.) Meanwhile, many a Republican Candidate Ahab seems to be haplessly

chasing the great Hispanic whale, which, even if miraculously caught, wouldn't do much to improve the party's 2016 electoral prospects.

Apart from Trump's vulgarity, his dissents from GOP policy orthodoxy upset not only K Street lobbyists but also sincere and thoughtful conservative policy analysts and writers. On issues such as eminent domain, trade, and judicial appointments, to name just a few, Trump would certainly be a disaster for conservatives. But his other dissents merit a more serious look: Trump's reluctance to intervene in foreign civil wars (a reluctance that Cruz shares) has much to recommend it when compared with the overreach of some of the GOP's nation-building superhawks. And his refusal to frontally assault Medicare and Social Security shows more political sense than does the major-surgery crowd—it is a stance designed to win the "Sam's Club Republicans" and Reagan Democrats the GOP needs in its camp.

Strong establishments take insurgencies' best issues and co-opt them. Weak and stupid establishments don't. Right now, the GOP establishment is weak and stupid.

Rather than attempting to present a forward-looking agenda that would appeal to a large number of Trump supporters and draw them into the Republican coalition, the establishment is seemingly working overtime to alienate them.

Rather than pursuing an immigration policy that would protect vulnerable American workers and bring in skilled immigrants while disavowing Trump's divisive tone and his impractical and overbroad prescriptions, it is promoting a quasi-open-borders policy that will perhaps keep maid service cheap for GOP donors—while electing a generation of Obamas.

Rather than thinking through what a strong 21st-century Reaganite American patriotism would look like, too many candidates have embraced a hyper-militaristic nation-building strategy of which GOP voters have wearied, and that a national electorate decisively rejected in 2008 and 2012.

For all his failings, his vulgarities, and his hypocrisy, Donald Trump is a man who sees what he sees—and says so. For the sake of the future of the Grand Old Party, let us hope that, with a more optimistic tone and a better set of policy prescriptions, more of us do likewise. **NR**

End Corporate Welfare

Republicans should give principle a try

BY KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

A CAMPAIGN against business subsidies—conservative warfare on corporate welfare—would present Republicans with an easy win: What other issue would energize free-market conservatives while stoking the sympathies of some traditional liberal Democrats, tapping into the new populist energy behind such figures as Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders while acting in the service of principled conservatism? None—so why can't Republicans get their act together on corporate welfare?

The answer is three-part: farmers, national security, and inertia.

Paul Ryan did not have much to say about corporate welfare until the bailout fiasco of 2008–09, after which he approached the issue with "the zeal of a convert," as Tim Carney of the *Washington Examiner* and the American Enterprise Institute put it. Since the dark days of the financial crisis, a great deal has happened for Representative Ryan, who would go on to chair the House Budget Committee and then the Ways and Means Committee, as well as appear on the doomed 2012 Republican presidential ticket with Mitt Romney, all on his way to becoming speaker of the House, the rarefied position in which he is today ensconced. Something else happened, too: He oversaw the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, a controversial federal agency that serves as the reification of American corporate welfare.

He wasn't happy about it. He registered his "strong disapproval" during the debate and protested that reauthorizing the bank meant exporting "crony capitalism," rather than the genuine article, to the rest of the world. The speaker is of course correct here, as a matter of substance: The Export-Import Bank does very little to contribute to the general welfare of these United States, though it

does a great deal to contribute to the welfare of a small number of firms, Boeing prominent among them, by, e.g., arranging sweetheart financing on the very loosey-goosiest of terms for overseas entities interested in buying Boeing airplanes. It isn't as though no other means of financing were available: When Congress last threatened to shut down Ex-Im for good, Boeing announced that it would finance some deals itself. And there's no reason it shouldn't: Big Boeing customers such as the Dubai-based Emirates airline, which is owned by the \$160 billion sovereign-wealth fund of the United Arab Emirates, are eminently credit-worthy. But the Arab jet set prefers the generous terms offered by the Export-Import Bank.

It would be more honest and more transparent if the U.S. Treasury were simply to write Boeing a very large check

ington. Everybody knows that doing the right thing when it is unpopular is very difficult for politicians, else we would have had entitlement reform and a simplified tax code decades ago. What's strange is that doing the right thing can prove damned near impossible even when it isn't unpopular—even when it's a little bit popular. There are no Americans ready to hurl themselves upon barricades in defense of corporate subsidies for Boeing, General Electric, Caterpillar, and Bechtel. A Mercatus study found that, in fiscal year 2013, 76 percent of Ex-Im subsidies went to benefit only ten companies, those industrial giants among them, and, though they do excellent work, no one weeps for Applied Materials Inc.

But no one much cares, either, meaning that this presents one of the classic political-economy problems: the mismatch between concentrated benefits and

fellow Republicans to get on the right side of corporate welfare as Americans recoiled from the spectacle of their government's pouring billions after billions of dollars into firms that were, in the famous phrase, "too big to fail."

Ryan was prescient in seeing that bigness was becoming, in a way that it hadn't been before, a factor in our politics, thanks in part to deep changes in the economy and changes in the political discourse related to the emergence of social media, talk radio, and other new forums. There is a very old populist tradition in the United States, but it was constrained by certain realities, especially by a media universe that was dominated by three networks, a handful of newspapers, and a couple of wire services. That cultural environment enabled a mode of politics that was dominated by political parties and their operatives.

Most voters don't really know what the Export-Import Bank is or what it does, but they have heard that it is a corporate-welfare slush fund.

every year, but we prefer an element of subterfuge in our corporate welfare. We give foreign firms money to buy products from American firms and call it trade policy; in much the same way, we give military aid to overseas governments, with the stipulation that almost all the money be spent procuring goods and services from U.S. military contractors, and call that foreign aid. Sometimes, the voters get a whiff of what's going on, which is why only a small minority of Americans told pollsters they favored reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank, though most voters, perhaps bamboozled by scary-sounding trade-deficit figures, support in the abstract the idea of bolstering U.S. exporters. In any case, most voters don't really know what the Export-Import Bank is or what it does, but they have heard that it is a corporate-welfare slush fund. Curiously, they heard that from Barack Obama, who apparently passed Paul Ryan on the road from Damascus: Once a trenchant critic of the agency, President Obama has experienced a conversion.

Paul Ryan's impotence in the matter of the Export-Import Bank illustrates one of the counterintuitive facts of life in Wash-

dispersed costs. Few Americans know enough about Ex-Im to much care about what it does, and those who do know and care are the ones with a direct financial interest in the agency's survival.

Ex-Im isn't at the top of many agendas. But the thing of which it is a part—corporate welfare—is. It represents a bigger chunk of money than does foreign aid, but, as with foreign aid, the case against corporate welfare isn't really about the money. We aren't going to balance the budget or forestall the implosion of Social Security by eliminating corporate welfare. But Americans intuit that something crooked is here afoot, and, for once, the popular intuition is correct. Republicans occasionally are presented with a political opportunity in which the right side of an issue is also the winning side of an issue, though they blow those chances at least as often as they exploit them.

In 2009, Paul Ryan wrote a column for *Forbes* titled "Down with Big Business," a nod to Robert Bartley's famous 1979 *Wall Street Journal* piece detailing certain abusive practices undertaken by General Motors. As he reliably does, Ryan made a cogent, canny, and eloquent appeal for his

Big Business and Big Government were very well suited to each other, and corporate welfare was a natural product of that symbiosis. But the balance of power has changed: For a generation now, the most important and profitable investments haven't been made by Wall Street financial firms but by Sand Hill Road venture capitalists. Nobody wants to be the next GE: Everybody wants to be the next Facebook, to such an extent that GE's most recent commercials all but disavow the firm's manufacturing legacy and present it as a kind of software start-up. Disruption is the order of the day: In the Republican presidential primary, the last thing anybody wants to be is the insider candidate, the establishment candidate, the party favorite, and thus the insane spectacle of sitting senators and a former chairman of the Republican Governors Association each insisting that he is more of an "outsider" than the next man.

Though neither group would be naturally inclined to see it that way, the tea-party populists and the progressive-leaning Silicon Valley disruptors are sides of a coin: the small and the new versus the large and the old, an emerging cultural and economic order at odds with long-

entrenched incumbents. But Republicans are having a hell of a time moving to the right side of this issue, and the usual explanation—big campaign checks from a corporation-dominated “donor class”—doesn’t really tell the story.

For one thing, corporate welfare is tied up in national-security politics, where Republicans reliably find themselves wrong-footed as their instinctive (if partial and limited) libertarianism comes into conflict with their desire for an unparalleled military, which comes, naturally enough, at an unparalleled cost. Without here attempting to reconcile the Churchillian and the Taftian tendencies in the Republican party, it is worth noting that a lot of what we call “foreign aid” consists of shunting great rushing streams of federal money into the coffers of U.S.-based defense firms ranging from traditional armorers to aerospace enterprises. The procedure for doing this is relatively straightforward: We provide our friends and so-called friends abroad with large grants to develop their military capabilities, but we encumber those grants, requiring that some fixed proportion (say, 80 cents on the dollar) of that aid be spent with firms based in the United States. The United States certainly has a legitimate national interest in encouraging Israeli military capabilities—an interest that would be served whether the Israeli government went shopping for munitions in the United States or in Switzerland. The conditions we attach to those grants suggest very strongly that we are using legitimate national-security concerns as a cover for simple wealth transfers. Republicans could make a modest start on reform here by delinking military assistance from domestic business concerns.

Beyond national security, Republicans face a special challenge in reforming corporate welfare because the largest share of such spending—about 40 percent, by some estimates—goes to a single industry: agriculture. Agriculture and rural life hit Republicans where they live, both literally and figuratively, which is one of the reasons agriculture-subsidy “reform” keeps making farm subsidy more expensive: The new Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program, which was sold to fiscal hawks as a more efficient alternative to traditional price supports, will add nearly \$2 billion in farm-subsidy costs this year, according

to a University of Missouri study. ARC payments to corn and soybean producers alone will come to nearly \$3.4 billion in 2016, according to the Congressional Budget Office. These are not, in the main, mom-and-pop operations. Far from being *Little House on the Prairie*, modern corn and soy operations are multi-million-dollar factories. As special-interest groups go, farmers aren’t a numerical powerhouse: About 3.2 million Americans are employed in agriculture. If Republicans are as interested in the soccer-mom demographic as they claim to be, they might start by asking why they are spending billions of dollars in soccer moms’ taxes every year to make those soccer moms’ grocery bills higher while ruining their Volvos’ performance with ethanol.

Finally, people don’t really write checks for principle—they write checks for self-interest. Pro-life activists, who are famous for their passion, also are famous in Republican-campaign circles for their inability to find their wallets. Pro-market conservatives have the odd Koch brother on their side, but compared with the concentrated financial firepower of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Realtors, etc., it’s a bear market for principle.

But that, too, is a surmountable obstacle. There is a great deal of money in angel-investors’ accounts and in venture-capital firms—and those firms are investing in new ideas and new markets, not in long-established industry dinosaurs with expensive K Street operations. And that is to whom Republicans should be making their case. But they aren’t. Having got themselves used to losing not only in California but in places culturally affiliated with it, such as Austin and Denver, Republicans haven’t found their voice on this issue. Instead, they’ve stuck to their familiar approaches—with familiar results. Being the party of Big Business hasn’t gotten the Republicans much—millions of conservatives see the Ex-Im reauthorization as yet another capitulation to Washington cronyism by a GOP too thick to appreciate that Wall Street went all-in for Barack Obama in 2008 and will do the same for the next Obama, whoever that may be.

Why not be the party of free enterprise and genuine principle? What do they have to lose, really, that isn’t already on its way to being lost? **NR**

‘Rhodes Must Fall’

The rights and wrongs of a movement

BY JAY NORDLINGER

CECIL RHODES had a rocky 2015. He died in 1902, at the age of 48. His last words, according to lore, were, “So little done; so much to do.” He did a lot, in that relatively brief life. He made British colonialism boom in southern Africa. He also made a fortune in diamonds. And when he died, he left that fortune to a variety of public works.

He never married or had children. In this, he was like Alfred Nobel. And they wrote similar wills.

Rhodes was a racist, certainly in this sense: He believed that he and his fellow British were the superior race. He wanted to bring the whole world under its aegis. His ambition did not exclude the “recovery” of the United States, as he put it.

Back to his rocky 2015—or to his will, first. He left the University of Cape Town the land on which its main campus now sits. There is accordingly a statue of Rhodes on that land. Or was. For decades, people grumbled about the statue, and this very much included Afrikaners, who resented Rhodes as a symbol and leader of their enemy: the British.

In March 2015, students at the university decided that the statue of Rhodes at last had to go—or, as they put it in their hashtag, “#RhodesMustFall.” Did they go about their protest in an orderly, logical, civilized way? Don’t be silly. Students don’t have the time or patience for that now.

First, they smeared excrement on the statue (human excrement). Then they occupied a university building, making numerous demands. And they revived an old radical slogan: “One settler, one bullet!”

Needless to say, they got their way. Within a month, the statue was felled, and the students had a new black-studies program.

Eight months later, in December, the “Rhodes Must Fall” movement moved to Oxford. This was Rhodes’s alma mater. He attended one of its colleges, Oriel, in the 1870s. On his death, he left the university a great deal of money—some of which was used for a building at Oriel, the Rhodes Building. It has a modest statue of

the donor. This is the Rhodes that “must fall.”

There was also money for the scholarships, of course—the famous Rhodes Scholarships, which have now gone to almost 8,000 people. Rhodes wanted to help students who had, among other things, “moral force of character and instincts to lead.” Our Bill Clinton was a recipient. He certainly had instincts to lead.

In addition, Rhodes wanted to promote harmony between nations and reduce the likelihood of war. So, of course, did his contemporary, Nobel.

At Oxford, the anti-Rhodes movement has been led by a law student from South Africa, Ntokozo Qwabe. He is a proud radical. He was disgusted by the widespread sympathy for France after Islamists attacked Paris in November, killing 130 people. “I do NOT stand with France,” he wrote. “Not while it continues to terrorise and bomb Afrika & the Middle East for its imperial interests.” (The young man makes a practice of spelling “Africa” with a “k.” Why, I don’t know.) He also called for the banning of the French flag on campuses such as Oxford’s. He compared the tricolor to the Nazi swastika.

Interestingly, Qwabe is a Rhodes Scholar. Naturally, he has been accused of hypocrisy: benefiting from Rhodes’s largesse while trying to tear him down. Qwabe will have none of it. “I’m no beneficiary of Rhodes,” he wrote. “I’m a beneficiary of the resources and labour of MY people which Rhodes pillaged and enslaved.” In his mind, all he is doing is “taking back crumbs of the colonial loot of Rhodes & his colonial cronies.”

Hard as it may be to believe, Oriel College has not yet taken down the Rhodes statue. It says it will review the issue over a six-month period. From what we know about university administrators, especially when racial pressure is involved, I would not bet the ranch on the statue’s retention.

Like you, I bet, I find some of Rhodes’s views repulsive. Not all of them, but some. Yet I would be perfectly relaxed about him on a building. Would I think differently if I were a black African, or a black anything? Or if I were of Afrikaans descent, for that matter? There is a wise and old sentiment: It’s remarkably easy to bear injuries done to others.

But if Rhodes must fall, what about other figures? Queen Victoria presided over the



The University of Cape Town’s statue of Cecil Rhodes comes down, April 9, 2015.

whole thing—the colonial and imperial enterprise, certainly in that era. Should Victoria Station be razed, or renamed? What about Victoria, British Columbia?

Every generation is appalled by the failings of previous generations. Every generation thinks, “How *could* they have?” and pats itself on the back for being infinitely better. Someone once said, “Will people in the future say, ‘Can you believe that human beings once kept dogs on leashes and owned them as “pets”?’” That’s far-fetched, though useful as a thought experiment.

I wonder, in all seriousness, how future generations will look on our policy of abortion-on-demand. Some of the best people I have known have been pro-abortion (or “pro-choice,” they would probably say). I think they have a blind spot. What are my blind spots? I don’t know.

If we subjected historical figures to our highest standards, few would ‘scape whipping. I think of Gunnar and Alva Myrdal, those progressive heroes. Swedish, no less! He won the Nobel Memorial Prize in economics; she shared the Nobel Peace Prize, with a Mexican diplomat. No one would say they “must fall.” But do their fans know about their early flirtation with eugenics? What they wrote in the 1930s might curl your hair. They said that society had to confront the problem of how to “root out all types of physical and mental inferiority within the population, both the mentally retarded and the mentally ill, the genetically defective and persons of bad character.”

Bad character? Well, we can’t all be Rhodes Scholars.

Reluctant as I am to whip erring figures of the past, I would not want to be too

loosey-goosey. Not too relativistic. I’m practically the only person I know, left or right, who liked George W. Bush’s second inaugural address—which was loaded with absolutes. “We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: the moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right.”

Once, William F. Buckley Jr. and the Reverend William Sloane Coffin were arguing on the former’s television show, *Firing Line*. Coffin didn’t like WFB’s moral stance (too firm). He quoted Goethe, to the effect that “I’ve never heard of a crime that I could not imagine myself committing.” WFB said (something like),

“Oh? You can imagine yourself pushing them alive into ovens? Really?”

In brief, there is a line between judgment—proper judgment—and judgmentalism. It can be an effort to stay on the happy side of it.

Here at home, we have our own campus controversies. One of them has unfolded at Yale, where there is a residential college named after John C. Calhoun. He had an impressive résumé: House rep, senator, secretary of war, secretary of state, and vice president. He was also an alumnus of Yale, one of its brainy southerners.

There is a move to take his name off the college. I will quote the petition, which explains that Calhoun

was respected during his time as an extraordinary American statesman. But he was also one of the most prolific defenders of slavery and white supremacy in American history. At a time when many of his southern colleagues viewed slavery as a necessary evil, Calhoun infamously defended the institution as “a positive good.” His legacy is built on his vociferous defense of a state’s right to enslave blacks.

So help me, I agree with them. And if I had a say or an interest at Yale, I would be in favor of striking Calhoun’s name. Therefore, do I want to rename Washington, D.C.? Or raze the Jefferson Memorial? Or boycott Madison Square Garden? Let’s not give in to extremes.

It consoles me about Jefferson that he said (concerning slavery), “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.” Calhoun never did any such trembling, so far as anyone’s aware.

But again, where will it end? Elihu Yale—for whom the university at large is named—evidently had ties to the East Indian slave trade.

Not every college can be named for William Wilberforce, that great abolitionist from Britain, born in 1759, when slavery was a norm of human affairs (as it has been since human affairs began). We have a Wilberforce University in Ohio. Most of us would rather attend a Wilberforce than a Calhoun. And frankly, I would rather attend a Rhodes than an institution named after Ntokozo Qwabe, in his present, addled, ideologized state.

I have a friend who bought an apartment in Manhattan not long ago. (I'm not changing the subject.) He and his family liked the apartment a lot. But my friend didn't like the name of the building, at all: the Oliver Cromwell. Gritting his teeth, he bought anyway.

About ten blocks to the south is Lincoln Center, which has the David H. Koch Theater, named after a man who donated \$100 million. Mr. Koch is a libertarian, and the people who work in the theater are generally . . . not. They tend to hate the name of the place, and some refuse to say it. But none has quit over the issue, I gather.

We all have to suck it up a little in life. In the future, no doubt, lots of things will be named after Barack Obama, our first black president, and a progressive hero. I won't like it, thinking Obama a disaster. When it looked like Iraq was going well, the comedian Jon Stewart said that he was worried his kids would have to attend George W. Bush High School. Unfortunately, he can rest easy.

Cecil Rhodes may not be resting too easy these days. Many people want to dig him up from the Matopos Hills of Zimbabwe—formerly Rhodesia—and ship him back to Britain, where he came from. Whole territories and countries were once named for him. Now he struggles to keep his mug on buildings that he paid for.

Next up for a name change? Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. He paid for that one, too. I don't say that people should have to live under names that they abhor (though surely donors have some right to be honored). I do say that we should strain to be as wise, and humble, as possible. And that the excrement-smearers and building-occupiers and slogan-chanters should be told to grow up or leave.

NR

School of Rock

*What you can learn
listening to Iron Maiden*

BY JOHN J. MILLER

THE heavy-metal band Iron Maiden often starts its concerts or encores with a short lesson in history and rhetoric. As fans watch jumbo screens fill with black-and-white images of aerial combat from World War II, they hear an excerpt from one of Winston Churchill's best-known speeches—the one that climaxes with “We shall never surrender!” Then the group's six musicians burst onto the stage and perform “Aces High,” their loud-and-fast song about the Battle of Britain. Bruce Dickinson, a frontman with an operatic voice, bellows lyrics about air-raid sirens, Messerschmitt 109s, and Spitfires. In the audience, thousands of people who know the words by heart sing along.

In a lot of ways, an Iron Maiden show is an ordinary experience of heavy-metal sound and fury, with deafening noise, impressive pyrotechnics, and a head-banging audience. The members of the group tend to wear black muscle T-shirts, dark jeans, and studded belts. They sport hair that looks like it hasn't been cut since the days of cassette tapes. The whole thing radiates self-parody, right down to the band's name, which is a reference to a torture device—a fitting moniker, given the heavy-metal genre's reputation for earsplitting levels of volume.

Yet for four decades—its latest album, *The Book of Souls*, came out in September—Iron Maiden has distinguished itself from competitors such as Judas Priest, Metallica, and Megadeth. Rather than playing thunderous songs about sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll, the band has played thunderous songs about history, literature, and mythology. Consider a few song titles: “Paschendale,” “To Tame a Land,” and “The Flight of Icarus,” which draw, respectively, from a gruesome battle in World War I, Frank Herbert's popular science-fiction novel *Dune*, and the ancient legend about waxen wings and

hubris. Total album sales, around the world, approach 100 million.

You don't have to like the music—I happen to love it—to recognize that Iron Maiden is one of the most fascinating pop-culture phenomena of recent times.

Bass player Steve Harris formed the band in London in 1975. They began live performances the next year and in 1980 released their first full-length album, the self-titled *Iron Maiden*. This debut launched the group professionally and also established Iron Maiden's iconography, including a unique logo whose typeface hasn't changed, as well as “Eddie,” a cartoonish zombie who has become an enduring character in the band's art and concerts.

Early on, it became clear that when Iron Maiden searches for sources of inspiration, it often turns to middlebrow culture, in the best sense of that term. The 1980 album contained “Phantom of the Opera,” a seven-minute piece drawn from the 1910 novel by Gaston Leroux and possibly the 1925 silent film starring Lon Chaney. (The musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber came out in 1986.) On a follow-up the next year, Iron Maiden offered “Murders in the Rue Morgue,” which is also the title of a short story by Edgar Allan Poe that is often regarded as the world's first detective tale.

Today, Iron Maiden's oeuvre consists of 16 studio albums—and sampling them can provide an idiosyncratic education. A friend of mine has a son who participates in high-school quiz-bowl contests. About a year ago, the boy faced a series of questions about Alexander the Great. Who was his father? Philip of Macedon. What Persian king did he defeat? Darius the Third. Which city in Egypt did he found? Alexandria. He knew the answers not because he'd read Plutarch, but because he'd been listening to “Alexander the Great,” a song from Iron Maiden's 1986 album, *Somewhere in Time*. Back when record stores stocked vinyl editions of *Somewhere in Time*, “Alexander the Great” shared side two with “The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,” sparked by Alan Sillitoe's 1959 story of rebelling against welfare-state conformity, and “Stranger in a Strange Land,” which is not about Robert A. Heinlein's novel of the same name but instead about the hazards of Arctic exploration.

Although these songs are topically interesting, they aren't Iron Maiden's best.

One song that the band commonly plays in concert is “The Trooper,” a retelling of “The Charge of the Light Brigade,” the famous poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson (who wrote it after reading William Howard Russell’s newspaper account of the Battle of Balaclava in 1854). Another well-liked song is “Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” a 14-minute epic based on Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poem about a seaman who kills an albatross and suffers a curse. Harris penned the lyrics, though in several spots the song simply reproduces Coleridge, including one of the most famous lines he ever wrote: “Water, water everywhere nor any drop to drink.” At the end, the song lyrics summarize the moral of the story, with the mariner fated “to teach God’s word by his own example / That we must love all things that God made.”

Despite this Christian message, Iron Maiden isn’t a Christian-rock band. Its third album, 1982’s *The Number of the Beast*, even sparked accusations of devil worship. The cover art depicts a crimson-red demon, complete with horns and a pitchfork, in the foreground of a scene that recalls Hieronymus Bosch’s paintings of hell. The title song begins with a short prologue, as a voice actor who sounds suspiciously like Vincent Price reads from the Book of Revelation, splicing together two passages about the devil and the number “six hundred and sixty-six.” The song blends the story of the 1978 horror film *The Omen II* with “Tam o’Shanter,” a 1791 poem about witchcraft by Robert Burns. Its narrator suffers from nightmares, worries about his sanity, and eventually recognizes that he’s the Antichrist. The song concludes with this line: “I have the power to make my evil take its course.”

Musically, it’s a great rock song—a miniature masterpiece of wailing guitars, pounding drums, and catchy choruses. Yet it’s easy to see how its lyrics might raise eyebrows, especially in Christian homes. Upon its release, a predictable round of denunciations and record-burnings followed. Controversy sells, and the flare-up probably fueled commercial success: *The Number of the Beast* became Iron Maiden’s best-selling record. The next year, on the album *Piece of Mind*, the band seemed to offer an

amused response in a backward-masked message—that is, one that sounds like gibberish until it’s played in reverse. The hidden line was a recording of drummer Nicko McBrain as he tried to imitate the thick accent of Idi Amin, the Ugandan dictator: “Don’t meddle wit tings you don’t understand,” followed by a belch. The album also carried the song “Revelations,” whose first verse comes, word for

fessors and I offered a one-credit seminar course on Iron Maiden’s lyrics. For a class on “The Flight of Icarus,” one of my colleagues started with Ovid’s treatment of the myth, then moved on to Dante, Bruegel’s painting, and James Joyce, plus a close reading of Iron Maiden’s version. The point was not to suggest that Iron Maiden belongs in this artistic pantheon but for students to learn about the



Iron Maiden performs at the Treptow Arena, Berlin, 2003.

word, from a hymn by G. K. Chesterton, the Christian apologist.

I came to know Iron Maiden in the 1980s as a teenager—the target demographic for heavy-metal music, then and now. When I first heard “The Number of the Beast,” I liked it but knew little of *The Omen II* and even less of Robert Burns. So the lyrics caused some anxiety. I was careful not to play the song when my parents might overhear. Then a strange thing happened: “The Number of the Beast” led me to pick up the Bible and read the Book of Revelation for the first time, in a search for meaning—and offering proof, perhaps, that the Lord works in mysterious ways. Other songs drove me to different sources, as I tried to decipher “The Prisoner” (based on a British television series), “Where Eagles Dare” (from an Alistair MacLean war novel that became a hit movie with Richard Burton and Clint Eastwood), and “Two Minutes to Midnight” (about nuclear doomsday). This fall at Hillsdale College, where I teach, a group of pro-

evolution of myths and metaphors, including the ways in which pop culture might convey them.

In the next few years, the members of Iron Maiden will turn 60, but they haven’t slowed down, even though Dickinson, the lead singer, just battled his way through throat cancer. *The Book of Souls*, released to favorable reviews, clocks in at 92 minutes. The title song, perhaps influenced by the 2006 film *Apocalypse*, describes the end of Mayan civilization. “Death or Glory” is about the Red Baron and triplane combat in World War I. The 18-minute album-closing “Empire of the Clouds” recounts the rise and fall of the R101, a massive British dirigible that was once the world’s largest flying object—and was destroyed in a fiery crash in 1930, killing almost all on board. It’s an interesting story from the history of aviation, and I knew nothing about it before hearing the song.

In February, Iron Maiden embarks on a six-continent world tour. I’ve already got my tickets.

NR



The Good Fight

A Cruz–Rubio showdown would electrify conservatives

BY ELIANA JOHNSON

ONE subplot of the Republican presidential-nomination battle has been an increasingly vicious and personal contest between two first-term senators, both of Cuban descent and separated by just a few months in age.

Florida senator Marco Rubio (44) and Texas senator Ted Cruz (45) are both men of superhuman ambition who have put their personal advancement over virtually everything else, including, many would argue, loyalty, wealth, and family. Both were at least thinking about running for president from the time they arrived in the Senate. Their talent and their years-long focus on reaching the White House are reminiscent of Bill Clinton's, and it's entirely possible that the only thing standing between each and it, aside from another Clinton, is the other.

"You interview hundreds of candidates and a few stand out, and Rubio and Cruz stood out," says Chris Chocola, the former president of the Club for Growth, the free-market group that endorsed both Rubio and Cruz in their Senate primaries. "They knew what they believed, they knew why they believed it, and they could articulate those beliefs."

Their ascent to the top tier of the presidential field, where they have been trading barbs, is, for conservatives, a mark of astonishing success. Cruz is now viewed as the most conservative viable candidate, while Rubio is widely considered the

most viable establishment choice (although he still has major competition from Chris Christie, among others). Yet this is a simplistic and somewhat misleading way to look at a prospective match-up between the two. Rubio was born of the tea-party movement and, during his Senate race, drove the liberal Charlie Crist out of the Republican party. That he is now considered a part of the Washington establishment says a lot about the transformation of the Republican party in the Obama era. "It's a tremendous testament to what conservatives have been able to achieve," says Mike Needham, the CEO of Heritage Action for America, a leading conservative-activist group.

Despite their obvious similarities, Rubio and Cruz have taken different routes to the top that reflect vastly different beliefs about what the GOP needs to do to win presidential elections again and vastly different aspirations for its future.

Rubio kept his head down when he arrived in Washington and used his time to develop a wide-ranging policy platform intended to draw new voters into the Republican tent—essential work, in his judgment, if Republicans are to capture the White House again. His failed push for comprehensive immigration reform was a move to the center, an attempt to attract to the GOP those who had never before voted Republican, and it earned him the lasting distrust of the party's base.

Cruz saw a different path that few had yet glimpsed and that many still don't. From early on, according to a top Senate staffer,

Tim Alberta contributed to the reporting for this piece.

he “saw the 2016 election as just a larger-scale version of these insurgent Senate tea-party campaigns,” and he used his platform in the Senate to position himself aggressively against Washington and the White House. The apex of his Senate career so far has been the 2013 government shutdown, a reflection of his belief that Republicans need only energize their most enthusiastic supporters to win at the ballot box. If Rubio thought he could unite the party by bringing together its conservative and moderate factions with a host of innovative policies, Cruz has sought to unite it by stamping out the remnants of the Republican establishment entirely.

Though Rubio and Cruz were elected just two years apart—Rubio in 2010, Cruz in 2012—they arrived to very different atmospheres in Washington, D.C. Rubio was elected as a part of the tea-party backlash that took the country by storm in 2010. At the time, it was virtually unheard of for sitting senators to be defeated in primary elections, though House members had been in previous cycles. Rubio’s election was a reflection of the first wave of grassroots outrage; Washington was still adjusting.

Mitt Romney’s loss in 2012 brought a genuine sea change. “I think many Republicans were not shocked that we lost in 2008,” says Dan Senor, who served as an adviser to Mitt Romney

and Barack Obama’s unconstrained progressive governance to create a new narrative: The battle playing out in Washington, he says, is not between Republicans and Democrats but between the elites and everybody else; not between liberals and conservatives, but between the “Washington cartel” and the American people.

Hear him on the campaign trail, on the Senate floor, or, presumably, muttering in his sleep, and Cruz is relentlessly on message. “What Ted talks about is framing the narrative, and whoever can frame the narrative wins the day,” says Brian Baker, a Republican political operative and longtime Cruz friend.

That sort of rhetoric—Washington versus the people—appealed to the portion of the party that is moved more by demonstrations of defiance than by detailed policy proposals. Which suits Cruz’s natural interests. “The big difference between the two of them,” says one Republican policy maven, “is that Rubio is just policy-minded. Cruz knows a lot, he just doesn’t think of policy in the way that Rubio does.”

A top Republican strategist familiar with Cruz’s thinking says he has no real interest in policy: “He likes to talk about political

Though Rubio and Cruz were elected just two years apart—Rubio in 2010, Cruz in 2012—they arrived to very different atmospheres in Washington, D.C.

and Paul Ryan. But, he says, many conservatives “couldn’t make their peace with the 2012 loss.”

Senor refers to the “psychological aftershocks within the base of the party” that caused an all-out revolt. Republican voters began blaming the leaders of their own party—rather than Democrats and the president—for the election loss and for the country’s greater ills.

Rubio was considered a possible running mate for Romney in 2012 and served as a key surrogate for him on the campaign trail. Cruz was elected to the Senate the day Romney lost, and when he arrived in Washington, the party’s base was in open revolt against its leadership. When he was sworn into office in January 2013, he understood both that the mood of the conservative grassroots was one of hostility to Washington and that the start of an open nomination contest was just two years off.

‘F RANKLY, I’ve found the more reviled you are in Washington, the more they appreciate you in places like Waco, and Dallas, and San Antonio,” Cruz writes in the opening chapter of his 2015 memoir. And, he might have added, in Des Moines and Reno, Concord, and Charleston.

Cruz came to Washington to make enemies of his fellow senators, and friends—fans—among the conservative grassroots. Much of the fury that fueled the Tea Party was directed at the Bush administration, whose bailouts of the nation’s big banks had been too much even for the president’s allies in Congress to abide. (Such establishment fixtures as Paul Ryan and Eric Cantor opposed it.)

Cruz was able to harness the agitation that had built over the perceived failures of the Bush administration, Romney’s loss,

strategy and the finer points of constitutional debates—everything is a constitutional-purity debate for him.”

Cruz has used the Senate as a platform for his message, displaying willpower in the face of criticism in ways that have electrified the Republican base. There was no greater example of that than the 2013 government shutdown, which took place less than a year after he was sworn into office.

A Republican aide sympathetic to Cruz’s position on the 2013 confrontation says that Cruz genuinely did not anticipate a shutdown. Rather, the expectation was that the effort, according to the aide, “could create some leverage for negotiators to get some sort of symbolic victory where some of the [Obamacare] mandates would be defunded.”

In the wake of the shutdown, according to one Republican operative, Cruz admitted privately that his strategy had backfired. It was a rare admission, a concession that there was such a thing as overreach in his attempts to invite the scorn of GOP leaders and ignite the passions of the Republican base.

Of course, the shutdown still benefited Cruz politically. The media and his colleagues heaped derision upon him, but he wouldn’t have had it any other way. The shutdown made him the face of the anti-establishment.

But that comes with a price. “The establishment is a real thing,” says the Republican operative, and if Cruz succeeds in winning the nomination, the Republican senators he has gained so much popularity deriding will be “knifing him in the back the whole time.” The broader implication is that, while the tactics that have endeared Cruz to his supporters may help him win the nomination, they may also put him, and his party, at a disadvantage in a general-election match-up against Hillary Clinton.

RUBIO made a deliberate attempt to avoid the limelight when he arrived on Capitol Hill in January 2011. He turned down hundreds of interview requests and declined an invitation to speak at the Conservative Political Action Conference the month after he was sworn in. Instead, according to an aide, he spent his time reading policy papers and boning up on national issues. He also began to receive a daily intelligence briefing.

"If I want to be a real serious policymaker, I need to be informed," he told the *Gainesville Sun* at the time. "I can't just read off talking points. I need to know what I'm talking about."

If Cruz maintained his position as an opponent of the Republican establishment, Rubio moved to fill the space between the Tea Party and the leadership of his party. In mid January 2011, he spent four days in Afghanistan and Pakistan with Mitch McConnell, then the Senate minority leader, who would eventually use his influence to help appoint Rubio to the foreign-relations and intelligence committees. Those posts would in turn help Rubio establish the credentials to become one of the party's leading spokesmen on foreign policy.

The McConnell trip wasn't the only symbolic step Rubio made during his first few weeks in office. Despite strong entreaties from the Senate's new tea-party caucus, he declined to join the group after expressing concern about politicians' co-opting the movement. Cruz allies, several in interviews for this piece, still criticize Rubio for hiring a K Street lobbyist, Cesar Conda, as his chief of staff. Another lobbyist, Sally Canfield, who had come to Rubio from the pharmaceutical industry, became his policy director.

Rubio has spent his Senate tenure working with reform-conservative ("reformicon") wonks to craft an array of conservative policy proposals, most of which haven't made headlines. They have served as an effective platform on which to run for president. Reformicons, and Rubio, have urged Republicans to move away from the solutions they offered to the problems of the previous generation—high income taxes, urban crime—and toward addressing today's problems, from stagnant wages to the rising cost of higher education.

Rubio, says Yuval Levin, the editor of the reformicon policy journal *National Affairs* and a contributing editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, "had a habit of getting us policy-type people in his office to talk even when he wasn't working on a bill, which is rare." Indeed, many of his legislative proposals have been plucked directly from the major reformicon publications—his tax-reform bill from a 2010 piece in *National Affairs*, proposals on reforming higher education from the reformicon cri de coeur book *Room to Grow*, and a welfare-reform policy from a piece in this magazine.

On immigration reform, Rubio saw an issue on which good policy would also make good politics after the party suffered a loss in 2012 partly attributed to Mitt Romney's poor showing among Hispanics. His allies say he always knew the issue would be a tough sell fraught with bitterness and controversy on both sides. But he was making a political calculation to appeal to moderates in his own party, as well as to Democrats. Rubio's positions on immigration have been wobbly: During his tenure in the Florida legislature, he voted to grant illegal immigrants free tuition and resisted Republican efforts to enforce immigration laws more aggressively; running to the right of Charlie Crist in his Senate primary, he became an

immigration hawk; and in 2013, he supported a path to citizenship for immigrants here illegally.

It was a colossal political miscalculation by a man who, despite his boyish demeanor, has proved himself a skilled infighter in situations in which many believed him to be out-matched, including the current Republican-nomination contest against his onetime mentor Jeb Bush.

All along, the Gang of Eight bill that Rubio backed had existed uneasily alongside the White House's push for immigration reform, and Rubio continues to battle the perception that he became a pawn in a game ultimately controlled by New York Democratic senator Chuck Schumer and his allies in the White House. A Republican supporter of the immigration overhaul says it became clear at a certain point in the negotiations that the White House was essentially running the show, and he remains puzzled why Rubio seemingly couldn't figure that out. "I think Republican primary voters are asking themselves that every day," he says.

If the shutdown was Cruz's moment of overreach in his attempt to become the figurehead of the Republican grassroots, immigration reform was Rubio's own overextension in an effort to position himself as a new sort of Republican capable of uniting conservatives and moderates. But whereas the shutdown only endeared Cruz to his base, Rubio's misjudgment on immigration seemed to threaten his national viability. At the time of the collapse of the Gang of Eight bill, many were writing Rubio's political obituary. "I thought Rubio was done. I thought, He'll never recover from this," says one Republican strategist. Time will tell whether the immigration issue costs Rubio the nomination or merely remains a problem he must contend with. If the former, it may be that the candidate who has until now polled most strongly in general-election matchups against Hillary Clinton was his own biggest obstacle to winning the nomination and confronting her.

Cruz has never been subtle about his path to the Republican nomination. He and his strategists have long said that they won't try to win over moderates and that the tendency of previous Republican standard-bearers to woo independents in the general election has demoralized the base, decreased Republican turnout, and ensured their defeat.

Cruz's advisers cite recent examples to make their case: Both John Kerry in 2004 and Mitt Romney in 2012 won independent voters and still lost, while George W. Bush's reelection-year focus on turning out the conservative base delivered him the popular-vote victory that had eluded him in 2000.

Cruz's campaign model is not that of the Republican moderates; rather, they are taking a page from the playbook of a liberal Democrat. "We have the ability to do what Obama did in '08 and '12, which is to expand the base," says a longtime Cruz friend. "And we think our base—you can't take it for granted, and you can grow it significantly." As Cruz himself told the *New York Times*, "the campaign that we are consciously emulating is Barack Obama's 2008 primary campaign against Hillary Clinton."

The Cruz campaign is built on the premise that he can consolidate the Right and that doing so is sufficient to win a general election. There is no doubt that he has made progress in uniting the base. Social conservatives, led by Tony Perkins of the Family

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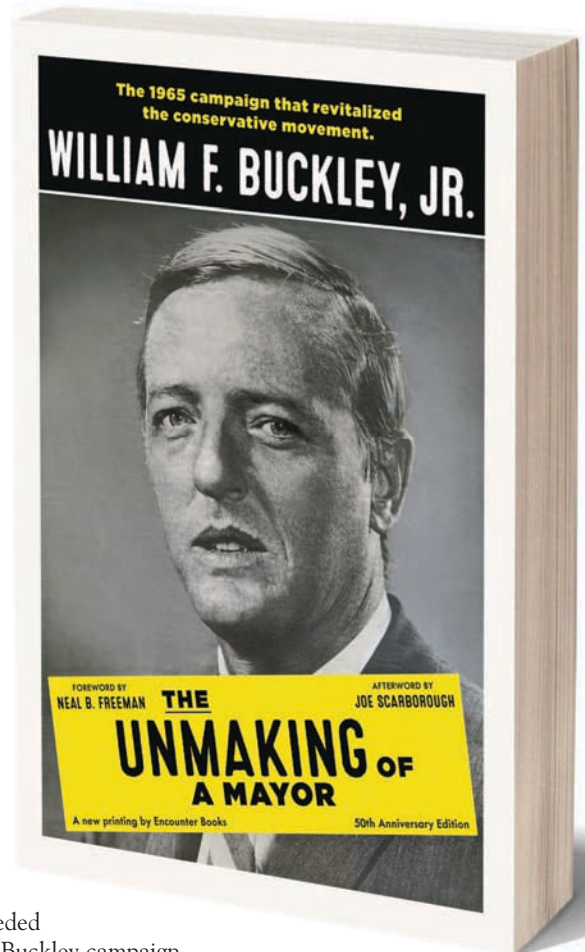
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But because of his own virtuoso performance on the trail, the *NR* editor somehow managed to turn a municipal election into a national event. Along the way, he also managed to supply a badly needed spark to what the candidate himself had called a dying ideology. The Buckley campaign would also unite a coalition of working class voters who would be labeled "Reagan Democrats" in the coming years. The conversion of these Democrats to the Conservative cause would provide an electoral road map for Republican success that would soon make Buckley's damaged party the dominant force in American politics for a generation to come.

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Research Council, have coalesced around Cruz, whose chief rivals in that camp—former Texas governor Rick Perry, Wisconsin governor Scott Walker, Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal—have dropped out of the race already.

Cruz has money (nearly \$14 million on hand at the beginning of October, and much more stashed away in a cluster of super PACs) and momentum, and he has invested heavily in fieldwork. In Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Nevada, his team boasts volunteer county chairmen in all 171 counties. It has volunteer coordinators in all 163 congressional districts in the first 24 nominating states. He has focused particular attention on the first-ever “SEC primary” (nicknamed after the regional football conference) on March 1, which includes several southern states flush with Evangelicals who have never before had the opportunity to influence the nomination process.

But some question whether his is a winning general-election strategy. “His argument is, not only do you just need Republicans to win the general, but you just need half of Republicans,” says a Republican strategist familiar with Cruz’s thinking. “It’s not terribly controversial to say we need not just Republicans, but some non-Republicans, too.”

Rubio’s theory is that a conservative can unite the Right, but that the nominee can and must attract the party’s moderates, and ultimately some Democrats, to the conservative cause. Meanwhile, it has come as a surprise to many that it is Rubio, rather than Walker, Jindal, or Perry—or Mike Huckabee or Rick Santorum—who is evidently emerging as Cruz’s chief impediment to unifying the party’s right flank.

Rubio’s advisers insist they are not ceding an inch to Cruz when it comes to chasing conservative voters, even as Rubio has become a leading establishment candidate, earning the support of top party donors, including hedge-fund billionaires Paul Singer, Cliff Asness, and Ken Griffin. “We are running in the conservative lane,” says a top Rubio adviser.

While establishment candidates in the past have had to drag the conservative base along with them, Rubio’s team looks at it the other way around. “The winner of this race,” says the Rubio adviser, “is going to be somebody in the conservative lane that has the ability to take voters, whether they are establishment or center-right, in some cases holding their noses,” and win their support. “Nobody other than Marco has the ability to do that,” he says.

Of course, the Cruz forces see it differently, and center-right candidates, including Chris Christie and Jeb Bush, have been hitting Rubio. And a significant obstacle to the emergence of this race is Donald Trump, who continues to lead national polls. Should it fully materialize, though, a Cruz–Rubio showdown would be epic for the Right. “If it comes down to a Cruz–Rubio race, it’s a huge win for the conservative movement,” says Wesley Goodman, the former executive director of the Conservative Action Project, an umbrella organization for conservative-activist groups and a candidate for state representative in Ohio. “I think most people will be with Cruz but secretly jumping up and down with excitement” about having Rubio as a backup.

The two candidates represent starkly different options for Republican voters about the party’s approach to politics, to policy, and to winning elections. Ultimately, a battle between them is a struggle over what sort of conservative, both temperamentally and ideologically, is a better standard-bearer for the Republican party now and in the future. **NR**

Winning the “Peasants’ Revolt”

*To attract disillusioned voters, the GOP
must understand their concerns*

BY HENRY OLSEN

THANKS to Donald Trump, American elites are finally paying attention to blue-collar, white America. They do not like what they see.

Racist. Bigoted. Irrational. Angry. How many times have you read or heard one or more of these words used to describe Trump’s followers? Whether they are the academic, media, and entertainment elites of the Left or the political and business elites of the Right, America’s self-appointed best and brightest uniformly view the passions unleashed by Trump as the modern-day equivalent of a medieval peasants’ revolt. And, like their medieval forebears, they mean to crush it.

That effort is both a fool’s errand for the country and a poisoned chalice for conservatives and Republicans. It is foolish because the reasons the peasants are revolting will not fade easily. Ignoring and ridiculing their concerns, the way European elites have done with their own electorates for most of the last two decades, will simply intensify the masses’ rage and ensure that their political spokesmen become more intransigent and radical. If you want an American version of Marine Le Pen tomorrow, ignore the legitimate concerns of blue-collar Americans today.

And it is a poisoned chalice for the Right because such a strategy requires a permanent informal coalition with the Left. Keeping blue-collar white Americans out of political power will result in exactly what Washington elites have wanted for years: a series of grand bargains that keep the status quo largely intact and the Democratic party in power.

Conservative Republicans have fought for 60 years to build a coalition that not only will tell history to stop, but will also channel it in a new direction, a direction in which freedom flourishes and America and her values reign over a peaceful and prosperous globe. The constituency that is rallying to Trump is not fully conservative, but it shares more values with conservatives than do any of the other constituencies that could possibly be enticed to join our cause. It is thus imperative that conservatives understand what these fellow citizens want and find ways to make common cause with them where we can.

Blue-collar whites traditionally have been animated by the sense that government ought to be on the side of the little guy. They formed the backbone of the Democratic party during its

Mr. Olsen is a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

New Deal/Great Society heyday, enthusiastically supporting a party that aided labor unions, created Social Security and Medicare, and expanded educational opportunities. While they no longer think of themselves as Democrats, they have not abandoned either these sentiments or the promises that these programs originally offered. Their openness to the Right is predicated on the Right's guaranteeing that these advances will not be undone.

Patriotism has also been a blue-collar-white staple for decades. Blue-collar whites may not be particularly hawkish (their sons and daughters are often our "boots on the ground"), but they are not isolationist or pacifist, either. They are proud of America, favor effective measures to protect our security, and do not like to see America humiliated by her enemies.

Blue-collar whites remain more friendly to traditional religion than other, more educated groups but are not as motivated by

Seventy-four percent say that our economy unfairly favors powerful interests, and 54 percent say Wall Street hurts America's economy. In each case, only "Solid Liberals" expressed more negative, anti-business views.

Trump's opposition to immigration and suspicion of free trade have been his calling cards so far, so it should be no surprise to find that blue-collar white independent voters share his views. The Pew study found that 79 percent think immigrants are a burden on the country and 44 percent think free-trade agreements are bad for America. These voters have been hit hard by competition from foreigners, whether those foreigners live abroad (free trade) or at home (immigrants), and they want protection—now.

Blue-collar whites are also more open to government action than many movement conservatives. For example, 87 percent of "Steadfast Conservatives," Pew's term for movement conservatives, think government is doing too much that should be left to



social issues as they were 30 to 40 years ago. Whites without a college degree who remain motivated by these issues are already staunch Republicans. Those who remain independent tend to be open to candidates' espousing traditional social values but do not prioritize those values highly when choosing whom to vote for.

Today these voters are most animated by a sense that they are being left behind by a changing America. They have good reason to think so: Americans with less than a college education have seen their incomes stagnate or decline for more than 15 years. Inflation-adjusted median incomes peaked for these men and women in 1999, during the Clinton administration (expect to hear a lot about that if Hillary is the Democratic nominee). Neither the Bush nor the Obama years have been good for them.

This has not made them want to overhaul America's private sector. Polls show that blue-collar whites still believe in free enterprise and distrust government solutions. They do not believe, however, that the current economy is serving them well.

These developments have led them to be among the most pessimistic of all American voter groups. Pew Research broke the American electorate into eight groups in 2014, and the one that contains blue-collar white swing voters—"Hard-Pressed Skeptics"—was solidly down on their own future and on America's. Sixty-one percent said America's best years are behind us, and 65 percent said that hard work and determination are no guarantee of success.

These voters also do not trust either Wall Street or the American economy more generally to provide for their future.

individuals and businesses; only 44 percent of Hard-Pressed Skeptics agree. Sixty percent of Hard-Pressed Skeptics think government aid to the poor does more good than harm; only 10 percent of Steadfast Conservatives agree. Seventy-nine percent of Hard-Pressed Skeptics say that cuts to Social Security benefits should be off the table. Clearly a campaign based on cutting food stamps and reforming entitlements will not resonate with blue-collar whites.

ONE might wonder whether meeting these voters halfway is worth it. But there is no alternative: All other voter groups who might be open to voting for a Republican nominee are farther to the left and oppose conservative consensus on key matters of principle.

Hispanics, for example, strongly favor government intervention in the economy. The Public Religion Research Institute has found that Hispanics favor raising taxes and increasing spending on education and infrastructure by a nearly two-to-one margin over cutting taxes and letting business grow. Upper-income young whites, whom Pew calls the "Next Generation Left," favor free trade and low taxes but are highly secular and green, opposing the traditional definition of marriage and favoring greenhouse-gas-emission controls. These voters will vote for Republicans, but only for moderates such as former New York governor George Pataki or former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Building a working coalition by focusing on

either of these groups, as many in the GOP establishment favor, would trigger a civil war within conservatism.

Winning the support of blue-collar voters means gaining their trust, and that means first affirming the core elements of their worldview. They have to believe that the GOP nominee understands that they have been the losers in the transition to a modern economy. They have to believe that the nominee will be on their side when the chips are down and that he is willing to take on the powerful. A nominee who appears ignorant of or callous toward these views, such as Mitt Romney, will be rejected as long as the Democratic nominee seems marginally acceptable.

This means that they will demand, at a minimum, some form of immigration restriction. America undoubtedly needs some immigrants to fuel its economic growth, especially since the native-born work force is aging. But “open borders” as an end goal of immigration reform will simply not fly with these voters.

The nominee should be guided by the principle “All the immigrants we need, but only the immigrants we need.” That means he or she should favor getting control of our borders and enforcing requirements to give American citizens priority for job openings. It may also mean reforms that help citizens move in search of work. Low-skilled, native-born Americans tend to stay in place when jobs leave their communities, a choice partially subsidized by a host of well-meaning government programs that allow them to get by without moving. Reforming these programs to encourage Americans to move where the jobs are will lower the demand for immigration and give blue-collar Americans of all races the help they need to get back on the ladder to self-sufficiency.

Addressing the downside of free trade is also key to winning these voters. Restricting trade itself is not a good idea, since trade creates jobs that these voters need. But free-trade competition places downward pressure on the wages and compensation of low-skilled workers. A GOP nominee who wants to attract these voters must embrace an economic policy that creates high-paying jobs that people with high-school educations can do.

This will require more than simply lowering corporate tax rates to encourage business investment, although it certainly does require that. It will require more than making it easier to produce oil, natural gas, and other natural resources that create good jobs for people with moderate levels of formal education. Ideally, it will involve enacting some policies that favor or subsidize high-paying jobs in America.

That could take many forms, but Wisconsin governor Scott Walker’s tax reforms give some idea of what one can do. He has not cut corporate tax rates in Wisconsin. Instead, he has enacted two tax credits that reward businesses for jobs they create and for in-state business activity. Federal corporate tax credits for companies that create jobs in America, and perhaps for companies that increase employee compensation beyond the rate of inflation, would show blue-collar Americans that the government is working for them.

Blue-collar voters also need to know that “playing by the rules” will be rewarded, not punished. Some of the major objections they have to immigration and trade arise from the fact that our government looks the other way at cheating when it comes to foreigners (e.g., Chinese currency manipulation and businesses’ hiring illegal immigrants) but rigorously enforces the rules when it comes to Americans. To blue-collar whites, “working hard and playing by the rules” is a core value; a government that doesn’t

share it is one that earns scorn and merits disgust. A GOP nominee who wants to win these voters over will have to show he is serious about creating economic rules that don’t disfavor American workers and will be enforced.

It is also possible to find common ground with these voters on tax policy. They will support tax cuts for everyone, even the “top 1 percent,” but they will not support tax cuts that seem unduly to favor the already well-to-do. This is a problem for most Republican candidates, because they have already endorsed tax policies that embrace the supply-side view that the best way to grow the economy is to cut taxes for the highest earners.

A politically ideal tax policy would look less like what is on offer now and more like what has worked for Governors Walker and Kasich (Ohio). Both Walker and Kasich have cut tax rates for all, but their cuts are much smaller than those that the other major candidates have proposed. Each of their state tax-cut plans also includes elements that backload the cuts in favor of working-class households—in Kasich’s case, an increase in the earned-income tax credit, and larger rate cuts for lower income brackets in Walker’s. A politically ideal tax plan would adopt similar approaches.

A bold nominee might even want to propose exempting the first \$20,000 in wages from the Medicaid payroll tax, which would lower the cost of hiring a new employee and nearly eliminate this tax for most households earning less than the median income. This exemption would apply to all workers, so higher-income taxpayers would see their taxes cut too; but it would apply equally to all rather than give a greater benefit to people who are already doing well. It would be a federal version of the across-the-board property-tax cuts that Scott Walker has enacted with great success, cuts that benefit all and give equal treatment to people in all income brackets.

THE same basic approach extends to a host of other issues. Higher education, for example, costs so much because academic elites keep out competitors and prop up tenured faculty who teach and publish very little. Deregulation and tying federal student aid to keeping tuition increases at or below inflation will give blue-collar students the education they want at a price they can afford.

Obamacare should be repealed and replaced, but with an eye more on how its replacement will work in practice than on how it looks in theory. That means designing a plan that subsidizes private-sector coverage and deregulates health-insurance and health-care markets to incentivize the private sector to deliver care more efficiently.

Conservatives can achieve all this while advancing freedom and opportunity. Ronald Reagan built his career on that understanding. Writing in these pages in December 1964, he asserted that conservatives “represent the forgotten American—that simple soul who goes to work, bucks for a raise, takes out insurance, pays for his kids’ schooling, contributes to his church and charity and knows there just ‘ain’t no such thing as free lunch.” Reagan spent the rest of his career representing that soul, and in so doing created the modern conservative movement and changed the world. We who stand on his shoulders would do well to readopt the sentiments that allowed him to attract the blue-collar Reagan Democrats and remake his coalition in our times.

NR

To Shout Is Not to Refute

*How illiberalism hinders the
triumph of reason*

BY RAMESH PONNURU

WOODROW WILSON was controversial among conservatives before the recent wave of unrest on campuses landed on him as an issue. Liberals have long celebrated him. During President Obama's first term, they wrote a spate of articles defending him from conservative attacks. For decades, the dominant assumption at Princeton was that Wilson was an unquestionably great president of the United States. Only the conservatives there had misgivings. They wished that the university's School of Public and International Affairs had been named after its other alumnus who became president—the one known as the father of the Constitution—rather than the one who criticized its checks and balances. Conservatives were also more likely than others to know Wilson's appalling record on race.

So while there is no evidence that left-wing activists at Princeton were looking to split the Right by raising the issue of Wilson's prominence there, they could hardly have selected among their causes one that would be better designed to do that. And they have divided conservatives. Most conservatives have weighed in against what they view as an attempt to erase part of our history. A few have argued instead that Princeton is honoring a man who does not deserve it.

Predictably, Princeton's administration has handed off the matter to a committee to study. We can trust that whatever it decides, progressive and conservative critics of Wilson will not come together behind the idea of replacing his name with Madison's. Our fourth president was, after all, a slaveholder, and owning slaves is objectively worse than supporting segregation, as Wilson did. What tells in Madison's favor is, first, that he was better by the standards of his time than Wilson was by the standards of his; and, second, that the rest of Madison's legacy has more to recommend it than does the rest of Wilson's.

THE recent agitation against Wilson does not allow for such considerations. Wilglory Tanjong, writing "on behalf of Black Justice League," explained the group's point of view in the student newspaper. Noting that university administrators conceded that Wilson was "deeply flawed," she wrote: "To be very clear, we owe nothing to people who are 'deeply flawed.'" That's clear as can be: Wilson's name is not to be removed as an exercise of judgment, but as the

application of an absolute principle that also condemns Madison, Jefferson, Washington. If Wilson's name goes, activists will take it as a momentum-building triumph for that idea. That fact, which would be true even if Tanjong had not written her op-ed, has to give pause to even the most anti-Wilsonian conservative.

An allergy to proportion and judgment seems to be one of the distinguishing features of the ideas and practices that travel together under the label of "political correctness." Were that not the case, many of the ideas associated with PC would be unobjectionable, even trivial. There is nothing in principle absurd about the concept of a "micro-aggression." (One example, with which I used to have a lot of firsthand experience, comes to mind: asking someone of South Asian descent where he's "really from" after he has just told you he comes from Kansas.) All of us should be aware that we can unintentionally slight or offend others, and we should try to avoid it; all of us should also have a sense of perspective if we are unintentionally, and microscopically, offended.

The recurring debates over college-commencement speakers is not one over first principles either. To be selected as a commencement speaker is an honor, and institutions can rightly withhold that honor from certain people for moral reasons. But when Smith College students forced Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, to withdraw as a speaker because she "directly contributes to many of the systems that we are taught to fight against," they abused that principle (as well as the ideal of clarity in prose).

Being non-white at an Ivy League school surely presents certain challenges that white students, professors, and administrators should try to address. Here is how that idea was presented in another op-ed at Princeton, this one by a group of graduate students: "Princeton University has deepened the anguish and intensified the alienation of its graduate students of color. . . . Students of color are constantly besieged by the racism at Princeton. Surviving Princeton, for students like us, is more than a struggle: It is a battle for one's life and sanity, for the dignity of one's non-white flesh." The occasion for this 2014 op-ed was a reorganization of the graduate school's administration. The specific complaint: "There is no longer an Associate Dean primarily devoted to issues of diversity."

In November, protesters at Yale angrily denounced offensive Halloween costumes. Not, mind you, because any students had actually worn any this year or last year. The problem was that a lecturer had suggested in an e-mail that the Yale administration take a step back from advising students on what costumes to wear and that students who take offense at costumes not overreact to them. Her husband, a professor and the master of one of Yale's residential colleges, defended this gently phrased e-mail. These were the provocations that led to demands for apologies and resignations. One student was videotaped screaming at the master that his job was "about creating a home," not "about creating an intellectual space" for conflicting opinions.

Around the same time, Yale was hosting a conference about free speech, and one panelist observed that the protesters had lost all sense of perspective: "You would have thought someone wiped out an entire Indian village." The

conference then drew protests for insensitivity to genocide, and its attendees were reportedly spat on. The impulse on display here, then, is not just devoid of mature judgment; it is actively hostile to it.

THE most troubling aspect of the PC impulse is not its insistence on renaming public spaces, its harangues about the improper use of pronouns, or its interest in making sure that Oberlin students can eat culturally authentic Asian food. It is that in the name of egalitarianism, PC threatens the robust exchange of ideas. We cannot overcome this threat solely by appealing to the contrary abstract ideal of free speech. Doing so will also require judgment and, if the word is still allowed in polite company, *discrimination*.

To begin, we must distinguish between the different challenges to open debate depending on whether they come from government, from university administrations, or from civil society, including the corporate sector. The threats to free speech that require the most vigorous resistance are those backed by the power of the federal government. Americans are more supportive than most people worldwide of the idea that individuals should be able to say what they wish free of governmental censorship—but they, and especially the young among them, are not supportive enough. A recent Pew survey found that 40 percent of Millennials believe that government should be able to prevent people from making statements that are offensive to minority groups. It is the sort of thing that might make us “speak despairingly” of young people—at least if we are not students at the University of Missouri Law School, which recently forbade them to do that on social media with respect to any group.

The editors of the *Washington Post* have presumably had more time than 20-year-olds to reflect on the matter. But they cheered the prospect that the Redskins football team would lose its trademark over the putative offensiveness of its name. A “victory for tolerance” was their Orwellian description of the trademark office’s decision against the team. The *Post* even suggested that senators should force a name change by threatening to withhold tax breaks from the National Football League. Good thing there’s no chance such an intervention would set a bad precedent.

The federal government has contributed to the climate of intolerance on campus, too. Federal statute forbids sex discrimination by federally funded institutions of higher education; the bureaucracy has interpreted this law expansively, to forbid anything that might create a “hostile environment.” Earlier this year, a professor at Northwestern University, Laura Kipnis, wrote an essay saying that colleges, influenced by the federal rules, were instead creating an atmosphere of “sexual panic.” Some students objected to the essay, and the university launched an investigation into whether Kipnis’s writing had itself violated those same federal rules.

Still more recently, 19 professors at Harvard Law School wrote a letter challenging the bias and inaccuracy of a recent CNN documentary about sexual-assault cases at colleges. (The letter indirectly concerned those federal rules, too, which have weakened procedural protections for those accused of sexual assault or harassment.) The filmmakers responded by suggesting that the professors, by writing the letter, had con-

tributed to a “hostile climate” at the university. The thinly veiled suggestion was that Harvard should discipline the professors or see its federal funding threatened.

Publicity forced Northwestern to drop its investigation of Kipnis, and Harvard has not acted against its professors. But people who want to make campuses less tolerant of opinions with which they disagree now recognize that the federal rules are a weapon they can wield. These people ought to be disarmed.

BUT neither the suppression nor the attempted suppression of debate on college campuses typically involves the federal government or violations of the First Amendment. Instead, it involves college policies and the temper of the student body, faculty, and administration. To think through the controversies that arise over speech on campus when government is not involved, we need something more than the principle that government should not use coercion to block speech. That something more has to do with the mission of the university.

We can see the insufficiency of the free-speech principle as a comprehensive guide to these questions most clearly at educational institutions that are explicitly dedicated to a particular worldview. In December, Wheaton College, an Evangelical school, put a professor on administrative leave, reportedly because she asserted that Muslims and Christians worship “the same God.” Her suspension gave rise to a lot of theological arguments, but no serious person argued that the college had violated a principle of free speech. On that argument, Wheaton would have to cease to exist as a Christian school.

The vast majority of American colleges have no such explicit religious commitments or comprehensive philosophical commitments. Instead they are, or should be, communities dedicated to the pursuit of the basic good of knowledge, even as they are also homes. Because of that mission, they must also be especially concerned to protect the robust exchange of ideas and must allow no rationally defensible view to be penalized or excluded from consideration.

Princeton University legal philosopher and political theorist Robert P. George made this point last year in response to yet another campus controversy—but one that had a different political character than most such controversies. Disability-rights activists had held protests against his colleague Peter Singer, a utilitarian among whose claims to notoriety is his argument for a right to infanticide. “Killing a defective infant is not morally equivalent to killing a person,” he has written. “Sometimes it is not wrong at all.” George is a leading defender of the view that all human beings have inherent dignity and a right to life, regardless of their age, ability, stage of development, or condition of dependency. He is philosophically poles apart from Singer.

Nevertheless, George defended Singer, and defended Princeton’s allowing Singer to propound his views at the university:

The right to academic freedom is held equally by all who are prepared to do business in the currency of academic discourse: a currency consisting of reasons and arguments. Singer does business in precisely that currency. He is not a demagogue, a shouter, a hater. He does not deploy abusive language or techniques of manipulation. He sets forth his positions with clarity and defends them with rational arguments.

Arguments are to be dealt with by meeting them, not by shutting down (or threatening, or intimidating, or even stigmatizing) the people who are making them. And meeting them requires thinking about them, even entertaining them in a serious way, however much we are scandalized by the positions for which they are adduced.

Note that this defense of open debate at a university does not deny that allowing people to offer their reasons and arguments can cause emotional pain, as it did in the case of Singer and the disability-rights activists. It assumes, rather, that any offense taken—even legitimately taken—is simply irrelevant to the case for encouraging debate. The truth can hurt, after all; and we do not aid the quest for truth by ruling offense out of bounds. We should of course also follow norms of civility that discourage giving offense gratuitously. But even if we believe that someone is doing exactly that, it is better to tolerate the abuse than to risk harming the inquiry that is the university's *raison d'être*. It is to President Obama's credit that he has spoken up for this academic ideal and against those among his progressive allies who have opposed or undermined it

the off-campus, Left. The claim is not: "Your argument for open debate puts too little weight on its costs because neither you nor most of the people you know have felt those costs." It is: "You may not make this claim. Your argument for debate should not be admitted into debate."

Our obligation to protect debate is less stringent outside the academy, but it is still powerful, and supplemented by considerations of civility and charity. Consider the case of the Benham brothers, who lost a planned television show about flipping homes because of their views about homosexuality, views rooted in their Evangelical Christian faith. They had no right to a show, of course; those who disagreed with them were free to complain, and the cable network HGTV was free to drop them in response. There is no ironclad principle that protects people from ever facing economic pressure because of their views. It would be proper to boycott a company whose CEO was a vocal supporter of North Korean labor camps, or Nazism, or the Westboro Baptist Church, or otherwise to seek that CEO's ouster.

But even if tolerance is not a universal rule, it is a valuable disposition. We should ask ourselves whether a particular

Our obligation to protect debate is less stringent outside the academy, but it is still powerful, and supplemented by considerations of civility and charity.

(even if it is to his discredit that his administration has itself often undermined that ideal).

A commitment to open inquiry should rule out shouting down people. More controversially, it should also lead to a preference for debates, panels, speeches, and dialogues over protests and sit-ins, especially when administrators have signaled their willingness to talk with students who have a concern. And it should set limits to PC culture on campus in other ways as well.

One popular campus-left slogan has it that some people, for example white people talking about matters that touch on race, should "check their privilege." There is nothing wrong with suggesting that people examine the extent to which their views might be skewed by their experiences. But when "Check your privilege" is used to dismiss views based on the demographic characteristics of the people who express them, it is an affront to the values that should animate an academic community.

A peculiarity of campus activism is that the loudest cries for "safe spaces" come from those who do not want it to be safe for certain people to express their thoughts anywhere. After the Halloween controversy at Yale became national news, a freshman at Princeton wrote a column defending the "open discussion of ideas." An op-ed in response built up to the conclusion that "as a cisgendered white male," "you simply lack the context you need in order to make the claim that freedom of thought should trump feeling safe at a school that doubles as your home." The PC movement, whatever else might be said of it, is finely attuned to how we use language to deploy power. And the language used here reflects a particular style of rhetoric now prevalent among the campus, and sometimes

view, regardless of how strongly we might disagree with it, is a sign of a vicious character; fairly answer that question; and act accordingly. Very rarely will the answer be yes. Wanting separate water fountains for non-whites would indeed be such a sign in our society, and it would be appropriate to ostracize a person who held that view. But that judgment would depend crucially on context: That view could be (and was in fact) held by people who were generally decent and well-meaning, if tragically mistaken, a few decades ago. At that time, it was right to seek to persuade such people to change their minds and even to pass laws overriding their views if they remained unpersuaded. But it would have been wrong to seek to deprive them of the ability to pursue job opportunities, have a public platform, and so forth. It should not need saying, but does, that there are good people on both sides of the debates over same-sex marriage, affirmative action, and the whole range of controversial social and political questions, and we should strive to get along while making our cases.

The argument for social tolerance of diverse viewpoints, like the arguments for free speech and for a free society in general, rests ultimately on a view of human beings and of reason that might be described as moderate. We must have confidence that people have dignity and rights, deserve respect, and are capable of rationality. At the same time, we must have humility about how well we apprehend the fullness of truth. We cannot be so convinced of the rightness of all our views that we seek to impose rather than propose them; we cannot be so thoroughgoing in our skepticism that we refuse to protect individual rights. It is a delicate balance. That is why it is a cultural as well as a legal and political achievement, and that is why it is always fragile.

NR



The Long View

BY ROB LONG



Text

Memorandum of Understanding

FROM: Donald J. Trump, President
and CEO of the United States of
America

TO: [Name\$String, Lastname, First-
name, CitizenID#.date]

DATE: [Date\$String mm/dd/yyyy]

To the Taxpayer:

Many thanks for your recent vote selecting me to be the President of the United States, effective Friday, January 20, at 12:01 P.M. I think you'll all agree that it was a spirited and passionate campaign. And though I must have struck some of you as "bombastic" and "ill prepared" (this I gather from my Twitter timeline), I assure you that now that the "fun" part is over, I am all business.

To wit:

I am pleased to be able to make a conditional and contingent acceptance of your offer, following your acceptance of my counter-offer.

While it is indeed a "great honor," as some have said, to "serve" in this office, it is not without its financial drawbacks. The current compensation package on offer for the position of "President of the United States" is U.S. \$400,000, which I think we can agree is a *significant* reduction in the monies I have heretofore been awarded/been paid/received in my various capacities as television personality, steak entrepreneur, and real-estate licensee.

Clearly, at the current offered level of remuneration, I will be suffering a

major financial loss. It would be counterintuitive for anyone at my level of compensation to accept less than he is accustomed to—in effect, to move *down* the ladder of prosperity—irrespective of my level of enthusiasm for the job on offer.

That is not to say a deal cannot be structured whereby I accept your offer of the Office of President of the United States and both parties walk away with a win-win attitude.

Allow me to make a counter-proposal:

1. The title of the position be reconfigured to "President *and* CEO of the United States of America," and I continue in that capacity for the duration of the first four-year term, whereupon the position become "President, CEO, *and* Chairman of the United States of America" (*italics mine*).

2. All parties make a good-faith effort to repeal the 22nd Amendment to the United States Constitution, allowing me to assume the position of "Executive Chairman" for the duration of my natural life. (Please see Appendix R: "Definition of 'Natural' in Term 'Natural Life'" for clarifications.)

3. The United States of America, as a brand, has suffered a major decline in terms of brand equity and brand crossover value. The next CEO will be tasked with improving the brand's value and increasing its power in the marketplace. I think everyone agrees that this is in many ways my *métier*. Therefore, what I'm proposing as far as contingent compensation is the following royalty deal: In addition to the congressionally approved comp package, a 0.1% share (or "points") in the delta (increase) in the GDP from 1/20/17 to 1/20/18, to be calculated by approved and normal GAAP methodology, and to be issued to me as a "performance bonus" on a year-on-year basis. In the fourth year, after four consecutive years of growth, a "super bonus" is triggered equal to 2x the previous years' bonus.

4. In the unfortunate case where the GDP does not grow, the bonus is calculated based on one of two metrics (to be mutually agreed upon): either a price-per-head "bonus" on each illegal immigrant repatriated; constructed feet of a wall along our southern border, on a per-foot basis; and/or a simple pound-for-pound tribute in the style of the old-school Aga Khan, in which my weight as of 31 December is matched in precious metals to be determined later but restricted to gold, silver, and rare-earth compounds. (The irony of utilizing an ancient Islamic-inflected form of bonus delivery is not lost on me or my compensation consultants at Semler Brossy.)

5. Liquidated damages/upset price equal to one year's bonus (previous year baseline) in the case of my contract's being inexplicably un-renewed following the initial four-year term.

6. Use of office space, staff, and travel allowance following the natural end of the contract in a location *substantially similar* to the original office, and with all amenities provided on a continuation basis.

7. Any substantial capital and/or physical-plant improvements undertaken and completed during the initial or subsequent terms will remain co-branded in perpetuity. Any bridges, railways, warships of any battle class, space-exploration vehicles or stations, national parks, waterworks, federal highways, or discovered suns will be appended with "Trump's™" trade dress and distinctive logo, e.g., "Trump's™ USS Gerald R. Ford Supercarrier" or "Trump's™ Interstate Route 71 Business Loop" or "Trump's™ Galileo VII Radio Telescope."

As you can see, these deal points merely serve to incentivize me to do the very best possible job. Please initial each item and sign the form below to execute this agreement.

Donald J. Trump
(DICTATED BUT NOT READ)

All about the Virtual Benjamins

BECAUSE Sweden is perfect and the United States is awful, we must always look to this small, dour country with its beige cuisine and ask what we can learn. The latest, according to the *New York Times*, is the move to a cashless society. This is not a reference to general impoverishment, but to the replacement of rectangular pieces of paper with incorporeal electronic transactions, frictionless and antiseptic. Swedes love it! They can text beggars a few krona without breaking stride. Why there are beggars in the Nordic paradise we can only guess, but come the day the government takes 56 percent of their income instead of 55.3 percent, such problems will melt away.

Anyway: As with many other changes in modern life, the abolition of paper money makes you think two distinct thoughts: 1) What a marvelous idea, and 2) How I hate it.

First, the marvelous part. I'm already accustomed to paying for things by waving my phone in the general direction of an electronic terminal. You press your thumb to the recessed divot of your pocket global-information/communication device, and invisible hands shake on the transaction. You get irritated when you have to sign something after all that. Really? You need my signature? Sure you don't want me to enter my phone number with a signal lamp, too?

The Holy Signature, however, is one of the theatrical rituals that give meaning to the weightlessness of modern transactions. There's an inkless pen tethered to a tablet, which has some marks on the screen because someone—possibly someone from the 19th century—tried to write “Bartleby Jehosaphat” with a real pen. You scrawl a smeary squiggled signature that looks like a snake trying to swallow some kitchen implements, then hit ACCEPT, which sets off a complex chain of events. The signature is uploaded to a vast international database in Zurich, which decides whether it's genuine or not, then the transaction is accepted or “declined,” to use the genteel word you'd usually employ for someone whose social status has diminished. All in a second!

Of course, that's not what happens. Everyone knows that you're just making your mark the way an illiterate miner scrawled his X on a receipt for his gold. No klaxons go off if you draw a KILROY WAS HERE picture. It's like the Official Scribble the TSA agents make on your boarding pass. We treat these lines like the King's Signet pressed in hot wax.

If we can get rid of the signature and go all-electronic, fantastic. When you're behind someone who waits until the bill is totaled to start spelunking in her purse for the checkbook, you wish everyone were cashless. Someday people will have tiny skull implants that let them pay by blinking

a personal code, and using phones and thumbs will seem like bartering with chickens. But for now, it's one of those marvels of the age that make life feel Jetsonesque.

ON THE OTHER HAND: Don't even think of taking away real cash. Incorporeal money is simply no fun. It has no pictures, no heroes, no history. Real money has denominations, each with a peculiar psychology. If you have five twenties, they evaporate like rubbing alcohol. If you have a hundred-dollar bill, Ben Franklin stares at you with purse-lipped disappointment, resigned to being spent instead of saved, and you're loath to fracture the note into smaller bills. Ten tens make you feel like a fellow with a roll, and you can imagine yourself peeling them off as tips to nightclub hat-check girls and racetrack touts. If you get a check for \$500, you cash it. If someone gave you a \$500 bill, you'd feel like you had a vial of nitroglycerine in your pocket until you got it somewhere safe.

The best argument for real money: self-protection. Paper money may be a mere symbol of our shared assumptions, but you can squirrel it away, and if the government wants to make it worthless, they have to work at it. If they decide there's a fiscal crisis that requires your contribution, and everyone's going to take a “haircut”—a charming financial euphemism for being barbered by a guillotine—they can't come to your house and paw under the mattress. Electronic money? Ding! Gone.

Ah, but this is paranoid old-think, right? It must seem like a Luddite fear to people who've cut the cable cord, have no land-line phone, never wrote a check, and waltz onto planes and into movie theaters by waving their phones. Yet these people know that a plastic gift card has more emotional heft than a text saying “I put \$35 in your account; happy birthday.” It's something that exists. Something you can hold. Try scraping the ice off your windshield with an e-mailed transaction receipt.

Of course, the value of everything can go to zero. Years ago I bought a collection of paper notes from Latin American countries—fascinating bills, elegant and intricate, each with its own national hero and founding mythos. They resembled American banknotes. They projected solid, sober fiscal values. Simón Bolívar glared out at you, his head perched above a high stiff collar, his piercing eyes informing the world that only a fool would doubt the coming rise of the Southern Hemisphere.

I'm not saying the money was worthless, but the dealer said he'd sell me the three-ring binder and plastic sleeves for \$20 and toss the notes in for free. It's still more fun to look at than numbers on a screen. Hyperinflation-plagued Zimbabwe's note for 100 trillion dollars, for example, demonstrates the shortcomings of a cashless society. You'd have to carry around a ten-terabyte hard drive just to buy a cup of coffee.

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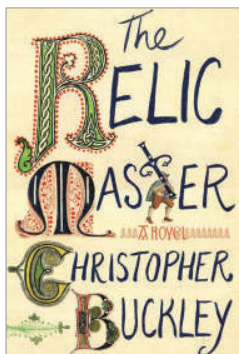
Mr. Lileks blogs at www.lileks.com.



Text

A Distant Funhouse Mirror

ANDREW STUTTAFORD



The Relic Master, by Christopher Buckley
(Simon & Schuster, 400 pp., \$26.95)

By the late Middle Ages, scraps of Mary Magdalene were strewn all over Europe. Not only was her body (or most of it) on display in the town of Saint-Maximin in Provence (it's still there, if you want to take a look), but, as Charles Freeman notes in his *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (2011), "there were three more of her bodies" to see, one near Ancona, one in Rome, and one in Constantinople. Lucky Abbéville had a head; Cologne had embraced two of her arms, and "five more were known" elsewhere. Relics were part of the sea of faith, to borrow a phrase, in which most Christians swam, but they were also a handily profitable device to prop up temporal and spiritual power. As such, they were an excellent business opportunity.

Enter Dismas, the Swiss hero of *The Relic Master*, Christopher Buckley's beguiling, funny, and slyly erudite new book. Dismas (named, not inappropriately, after the penitent thief crucified alongside Christ), a former mercenary—a *Reisläufer*—and former monk

("couldn't get used to the hours"), has become a dealer in relics, one of the best, a man not without a certain degree of integrity. Disdainful of the sloppier and more disgraceful frauds, he deals in nothing he knows to be false. He stands by that leaf he sold from the Burning Bush.

Dismas is in Basel for the 1517 relic fair, a fair that never existed but is located by Buckley in a city that plays host nowadays to an annual fair showcasing contemporary art. The kneecap of Saint Afra then, a spot painting by Damien Hirst now, objects of desire and of worship, objects that magically bestow much-coveted properties on their owners, some sort of holiness in the first case, some sort of sophistication in the second, as well as the status that comes with buying anything—kneecap or spot—that is outrageously expensive enough.

Such relics often fetched tidy sums, not least because of the revenues brought by the pilgrims who came to venerate them, thereby possibly improving their prospects in the afterlife—for a price: "Donate such and such sum," writes Buckley, "to venerate such and such relic, and so many years would be deducted from your term in Purgatory." They could be useful, indulgences: get-out-of-purgatory-sooner cards, never short of takers. After Basel, Dismas delivers a haul of relics to one of his two main clients, an archbishop of great splendor and greater cynicism. After careful episcopal evaluation, it is determined that the 296 relics "would provide an aggregate indulgence value of 52,206 years off time in Purgatory. And provide his grace with a tidy return on his investment." It was madness, but, like many manias, not without its internal logic.

Buckley's tone is amused and amusing, but choosing to write such a book now, after the Internet bubble, after the 2008 bust (how were collateralized mortgage obligations, uh, valued, anyway?), and at a time when billion-dollar "unicorns" gallop through private-equity portfolios, undercuts any suggestion of condescension. Thus Dismas and many, many others discover that

their cash has been looted by a crooked financier, Master Bernhardt. The locals contemplate what might be an appropriately grotesque punishment—burning, death by bear, something even nastier involving fishhooks? In the end, he gets off with a "well-attended" beheading. Absent the beheading, an echo of Madoff there, I thought; Bernie, Bernard, ah.

The year 1517 is an interesting one—a year at the cusp—for Buckley to pick. Within weeks of Dismas's expedition to the relics fair, he is in Wittenberg, visiting his other key client, the Elector Frederick of Saxony. And Dismas is with Frederick when the elector is told that Martin Luther has been busy at the Castle Church: "'Ninety-five [theses],' Frederick smiled, 'is our church door sufficiently commodious?'"

Dismas is soon wondering what Luther's less than indulgent treatment of indulgences might mean for his trade: "Many indulgences were earned by venerating relics. If indulgences were abolished, who would come to venerate the holy bones?" He was right to worry: Frederick gave up collecting relics within a year or two. And then there was grim John Calvin. His *Treatise on Relics* (1543) is a work far rougher on those souvenirs of sanctity than anything you'll find in Buckley. So much of the Virgin Mary's milk was on display, jeered Calvin, that "had the Virgin been a wet-nurse her whole life, or a dairy, she could not have produced more than is shown as hers in various parts." *A dairy*.

Hints of the shift in thinking beginning to percolate through Europe at this time are scattered through *The Relic Master*. Dismas is a traditionalist, but he struggles to answer some of the increasingly awkward questions that his friends are beginning to ask. Surely the "indulgence business" was in the Gospels "somewhere."

I'll pause now to reassure anyone worried that he or she has stumbled into a discussion of a learned volume on 16th-century religious controversies rather than a review of the latest book by Christopher Buckley, a famously

enjoyable writer related, so to speak, to this magazine. Fear not: *The Relic Master* covers some serious historical ground and boasts an impressive list of sources at the end, including Freeman's book and an account of a marriage in 16th-century Nuremberg that I, for one, will be hurrying to read—one day. But it also features killings, torture, hand-to-hand fighting, attempted crucifixions, a beautiful girl, bizarre superstitions, three loutish arquebus-slingers, trout nibbling at a severed arm, power politics, a lecherous Medici, herbal *Viagra that works*, black humor ("Frederick's not a burner"), good jokes, and some splendidly wry writing: "Tetzel was a supple theologian. He'd pioneered a new form of

attitudes are presented lightly and never weigh down what is essentially a romp, a caper, written with a wink ("A German pope? Judgment Day will come first") in breezily contemporary prose (not a "prithee" in sight). Buckley is often described as a satirist, but in this book he comes across more as someone enormously entertained by man's perennial absurdity, an absurdity he relishes pushing just that bit further, teasing then—and now.

So far as the plot is concerned, the MacGuffin involves the faking of one Jesus burial shroud and then the taking of another (it's complicated). Dismas's dream of a prosperous retirement in safe, neutral Switzerland (Harry Lime might sneer, but the Swiss have long

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indulgence whereby you could buy full indulgence for sins you had not yet committed. Even Jesus hadn't thought of that." *Supple*.

It's never easy to know how to handle the distant past in fiction. Hollywood's classic couldn't-care-less generated some terrific lines ("War, war! That's all you ever think about, Dick Plantagenet! You burner, you pillager!") but failed to convince, while more respectable attempts at the old ye olde were neither authentic nor readable: Sir Walter Scott, I'm looking at you. Others have mined history to make fun of the present, or to make fun of the past; some—Robert Harris, for example, in his Cicero trilogy—have treated it seriously, both as a window into a vanished civilization and as a device to reexamine more modern times. Others still (such as, in his own way, Umberto Eco in *The Name of the Rose*) have tried to understand a way of thinking that can seem impossibly alien today.

There are glimpses of that lost sensibility in *The Relic Master*. Buckley's characters are not Enlightenment folk centuries out of time, or even Bob Hopes cracking wise on the road to Chambéry—but their 16th-century

been a sensible people) has been trashed by the banker who looted his savings. That compels him to go on one last, atypically dodgy "mission"—that's where the shroud(s) come in—to earn back that retirement in the mountains. And as we all know, one last missions have a way of turning tricky. Dismas's farewell tour is no exception. I won't be a spoiler, but I will say that, once again, fishhooks have an unpleasant role to play, that a ridiculously narcissistic Dürer (yes, that Dürer) is an accomplice, that the girl shoots a mean crossbow, that an imperial posse is thwarted, that disguises are deployed, that a performance of the Last Supper is sabotaged, and that the arquebus-slingers—Unks, Cunrat, and Nutker, three goons with strong Three Stooges characteristics—turn out not to be so bad in the end.

It's a story that—as capers should—rolls merrily along. It was clearly fun to write, and it is certainly fun to read, but the very best of this book comes in moments such as this, included in the description of Dismas's arrival in Wittenberg:

"Did you bring wonderful things?"

"One or two. Saint Barbara. A toe." **NR**

Churchill's Meditations

TRACY LEE SIMMONS



Churchill's Trial: Winston Churchill and the Salvation of Free Government, by Larry P. Arnn
(Thomas Nelson, 240 pp., \$23.99)

OF all the impulses that may drive someone to add yet another book to the colossal literature on Winston Churchill, one that quietly throws singular light on Churchill's sober grasp of statesmanship isn't the spiciest. We prefer to read about the dashing young army officer who took part in the British Army's last cavalry charge; the lone defiant voice warning his nation of Hitler's military buildup in the 1930s; the buoyant warlord prime minister who faced down the Nazi blitzkrieg; or even the venerable lion whom the British electorate sent out to pasture in stunning ingratitude after the war but who then went on, improbably, to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. These Churchills make better copy. We prefer dash, the unexpected, a well-aimed bon mot, and a splash of occasional political recklessness in the name of principle—in short, everything we know not to expect from politicians nowadays.

But as Larry Arnn shrewdly reminds us in this new book, we blame our contemporaries unjustly for not measuring up to Churchill: Leaders of his caliber have always been rare. Yet that fact doesn't let us off the hook. We're duty-

Mr. Simmons is the author of Climbing Parnassus and teaches humanities in the Westover Honors Program at Lynchburg College.

bound to learn as much as we can from those few men and women on the political stage who have been deemed great.

This is a timely reminder; seldom have we needed Churchillian leadership more acutely. But we need to acknowledge the roots of his success: It is not only the brave Churchill of the battlefield and bombed-out ruins of the newsreels we ought to learn from, but also the Churchill of the library, the one who could act prudently because he had read deeply and thought with a clear if crowded mind about the world, not only as we would have it be but as it is. It's Churchill the thinker and political philosopher (and, in not a few cases, Churchill the prophet) Arnn chooses to give us here. It's the Churchill who believed that to govern

conviction that a free people, educated in the arts of freedom, can and should be entrusted with their own governance, and indeed that only by such freedom can they realize their full potential as human beings worthy of that freedom. This idea may strike us as the elementary, pietistic stuff of civics class, but it isn't. It's the fundamental baseline for rational, lucid thinking about the life well lived.

A corollary to this conviction, though, is that such freedom, once achieved, can and will be lost should it not be vigorously re-explained and re-defended with each new set of beneficiaries; freedom is not a possession forever but a fragile fortress under relentless, if sometimes remote, attack, and it can never be taken for granted. Each new generation must

ical as cultural, and even spiritual. These too Churchill was able to diagnose with the penetrating judgment of a historian and a man fighting in the dust of the arena. "No material progress," Churchill wrote, "even though it takes shapes we cannot now conceive, or however it may expand the faculties of man, can bring comfort to his soul." This arduous work individuals must do for themselves, and expecting governments made up of fallible people, with links to wisdom that are tenuous at best, to accomplish for all what only the few and disciplined can accomplish with any predictable felicity on their own is highly unrealistic; citizens suffer when their governments are "ill-directed or mis-directed by their rulers," an outcome more than likely when people are acci-

Freedom is not a possession forever but a **fragile fortress** under relentless, if sometimes remote, attack, and it can never be taken for granted.

without a solid philosophy—a set of high and ineluctable principles grounded in reality as revealed by that constellation of experience we call history—is to sail a ship without a rudder. The good statesman acts, but only after meditation, and it is the substance of Churchill's meditations that we're here invited to enter.

A keen student of Churchill since he served as research director for Sir Martin Gilbert (Churchill's official biographer) almost 40 years ago, Arnn sets himself the formidable task of dredging up the key themes of thought and action that run as consistently as a meandering stream through Churchill's long and contentious career, a career that was by his 65th birthday, in 1939, judged by many to be mixed at best and at worst a failure. The author has a munificent treasure to mine: A hundred years from now our descendants may be poring over some politician's collected Tweets, but fortunately Churchill wrote concise, sharpened sentences and nuanced, barrel-aged, mature paragraphs conveying real ideas and impressions and conclusions and not merely crude, attention-grabbing expostulations.

Arnn finds one central theme to elaborate: Churchill's steady blue-flame

make itself guardians. And what are the enemies of freedom against which we all need to arm ourselves? These Churchill spent his entire adult life exposing, as Arnn does here.

We're taken methodically on a tour of those toxic agents that are, according to Churchill, perpetually poised to destroy freedom within the Western democracies: the destabilization of the rule of law by arbitrary fiat and legislating against the grain of human nature; the erosion of the constitutional constraints of limited government; the lazy ceding to meddling bureaucrats—who become "neither civil nor servants"—and "experts" of decisions that should be left solely to citizens and their elected representatives; and the sapping of the initiative of private enterprise, accompanied by blind acquiescence to intrusive state control to reach a dubious and self-defeating social equality. Arnn fleshes out all these enemies of liberty and human dignity in the gritty context of Churchill's struggles over 50 years.

These are all, in the main, well-recognized political difficulties within the range of savvy political handling; not so with other difficulties plaguing modern life, which aren't so much polit-

dentally or deliberately unschooled in the arts of freedom. This is a Churchill we don't often hear, but his voice gets amplified in this volume.

It isn't surprising that Larry Arnn, the president of Hillsdale College, would also find occasion while delving into the depths of Churchill's mind to rehearse the great man's too-little-known ideas about the nature of education. Churchill traced many of our modern maladies to the disintegration of the ideal animating liberal education of the classical sort—the kind that discusses ends, not means—and believed that any course of instruction that seeks to do less is an exercise in evasion and does not deserve the noble label of education at all. Churchill warned of the new technocracies of mechanized men in which education would become "universal and superficial"—the first he endorsed, though he feared it could not be realized without the second. The best education, Churchill said, the kind that will have the best chance of preserving our freedoms by enlightening a citizenry to its rights and duties both, requires a "detachment from material affairs" and a concentration on high and ultimate things. In the world to come, education should become "broader and more liberal"

because “all wisdom is not new wisdom”; much that we need to know has already been discovered; we have only to learn and then apply it to new circumstances. Education, in the end, ought to prompt us to answer the simple and profound questions of “Why are we here?” and “What is the purpose of life?” When one ponders these words, one begins to see further latent causes of Churchill’s greatness. He had a compass, and not for worldly things alone.

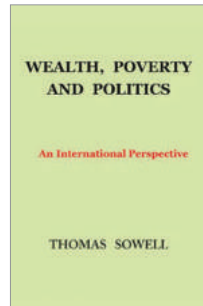
It was Churchill who reminded us that we have no choice as citizens of a republic but to be students of history, a source of knowledge deemed superfluous only in propagandized, totalitarian societies where the human spirit is stifled. “A nation that forgets its past,” he wrote, “has no future”—or the future it will have will be one over which it will exert little or no control because those arts of freedom that provide leverage for its citizens will have been forgotten. This trial, this fight for freedom, was one that Churchill chose to engage not for the sake of the “future,” but for those who will live there. And the distinction wasn’t slight to a man who believed in the sovereignty of the individual.

All the reflections brilliantly culled here from the work of an author who wrote around 15 million words—histories, articles, sketches, speeches—aim squarely to bolster Churchill’s claim that this civilization will not survive without a place for a kind of statesmanship practiced for the wider sake of human flourishing, and one that requires wisdom, which is in uncommonly short supply in any age, yet perilously so now when warring ideologies cloud the air. But we must not be ships adrift. Churchill would have us in charge, not simply the floating wreckage of other people’s decisions. “Churchill’s life may be seen,” Arnn writes astutely, “as an attempt to supply through statesmanship a vindication of human choice.” And as Arnn reminds us, the fight that Churchill joined, to preserve human freedom, is ours now, and it can be won.

Chesterton once said that people who make history don’t know any, and we can tell by the kind of history they make. Churchill, the happy warrior, was also the happy exception, and we can tell by the history he made and told—the kind only the wise can acknowledge. **NR**

The Causes Of Wealth

REIHAN SALAM



Wealth, Poverty and Politics: An International Perspective, by Thomas Sowell
(Basic, 336 pp., \$29.99)

ONE of the more striking public-health developments of the post-war era has been the rise in the number of Americans suffering from cardiovascular disease, particularly in the states of the old Confederacy. Recently, two economists, Richard H. Steckel and Garrett Senney, have offered a clever hypothesis as to why cardiovascular disease has grown so prevalent in the South. They begin by observing that when a child is in the womb, her body builds its organs in accordance with the best available information about the nutrition that will be available once she is born, information that is transmitted via her mother’s placenta. When there is a mismatch between the expectations set during the course of fetal development and the reality of life as a child, the result can be serious physiological stress that raises the risk of all kinds of diseases, including cardiovascular disease.

Which brings us to the post-war American South. Steckel and Senney find that the risk of cardiovascular disease increased most dramatically in the U.S. states that experienced the most rapid income growth from 1950 to 1980. That is, the post-war boom that saw the southern U.S. catch up with the rest of the country seems to have contributed to unbalanced physical growth in southern children. Essentially, babies who developed in the expectation that their childhoods would be deprived had a hard time

adjusting to the conditions of abundance that materialized instead. There are many other factors at work, to be sure, and Steckel and Senney’s findings are not yet the received wisdom among public-health scholars. Yet there is something more than a little poignant about their hypothesis: Just as every cloud has a silver lining, even the best economic news can exact a human toll. More broadly, Steckel and Senney’s work reminds us that many of the most powerful forces shaping our lives are entirely out of our control. Yes, you might be able to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease by maintaining a more active lifestyle, and by eating more leafy greens. But there is very little one can do about the circumstances of one’s fetal development.

I thought of Steckel and Senney’s work while reading Thomas Sowell’s latest book. Never one to shrink from an ambitious undertaking, Sowell offers a brief survey of global economic history to explain why some societies, and some subcultures, are so rich while others are so poor. Drawing on evidence from a wide range of sources, Sowell demonstrates that the lives we lead today bear the consequences of decisions made by our ancestors long ago, and of accidents of geography in which we’ve played no role. These differences contribute to inequalities of wealth and power across individuals and groups. Yet Sowell insists that these differences aren’t etched in stone. The central argument of *Wealth, Poverty and Politics* is that the members of one group can learn from the members of another, provided they don’t allow envy and resentment to poison their worldview.

To get to this point, Sowell first seeks to demystify the sources of group differences. Does the fact that the Chinese are so much wealthier than the peoples of the landlocked Central African Republic reflect some intrinsic superiority on the part of the former, or might there be other factors at work? Sowell suggests the latter. Consider the role of geography. The coastlines of East Asia are dotted with superb natural harbors, which greatly facilitated the emergence of seafaring cultures and the spread of valuable knowledge and goods. The same cannot be said of the coastlines of sub-Saharan Africa, where natural harbors are few and far between. While Chinese civilization arose alongside a vast network of navigable rivers, tropical Africa is not so blessed.

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TUE/Nov. 15	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
WED/Nov. 16	Grand Cayman)	8:00AM	4:00PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
THU/Nov. 17	Cozumel	11:00AM	11:00PM	morning seminar late-night Smoker
FRI/Nov. 18	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars "Night Owl" session
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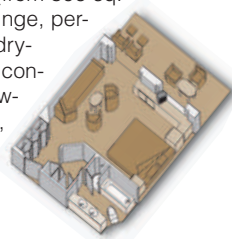
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Category VC	17-younger: \$ 617	18-up: \$ 798
Categories SS & SA	17-younger: \$ 670	18-up: \$ 851

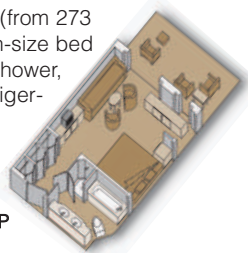
DELUXE SUITE Magnificent quarters (from 506 sq. ft.) features use of exclusive Neptune Lounge, personal concierge, complimentary laundry/dry-cleaning service, large private verandah, convertible king-size bed, whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, safe, much more.



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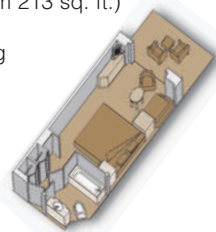
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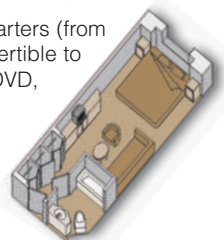
DELUXE OUTSIDE Spacious cabin (from 213 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bath/shower, sitting area, mini-bar, TV/DVD, refrigerator, and floor-to-ceiling windows.



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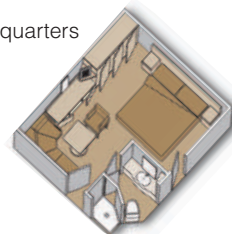
LARGE OCEAN VIEW Comfortable quarters (from 174 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bathtub/shower, sitting area, TV/DVD, large ocean-view windows.



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One result is that Chinese culture spread across a vast geographical zone while sub-Saharan Africa is far more culturally fragmented, a fragmentation that has long posed a barrier to political and economic coordination. While China, a country of over 1.3 billion, is remarkably cohesive given its size, the Central African Republic, a country of 4.6 million, is plagued by ethnic conflict, and much the same can be said of sub-Saharan Africa writ large.

Waterways aren't everything, to be sure. Sowell observes that though the Amazon is unmatched in its navigability and its length, it can't hold a candle to lesser rivers such as the Mississippi or the Rhine as an artery of commerce. The value of a given natural resource depends heavily on the availability of the knowledge needed to exploit it. Iron-ore and oil deposits are worthless if you can't make use of them, which is a big part of why rising European states were able to vanquish the decaying states of the Americas, Asia, and Africa during the age of imperialism. Human progress is driven by complex interactions between the obstacles we encounter in our daily lives, the ingenious solutions we devise to overcome these obstacles, and the systems we employ to spread these solutions and to constantly replace them with better ones. Just as the capacity to devise these new solutions and to make use of them is distributed unevenly across individuals, it is distributed unevenly across cultures. The question is how societies react to this uneven distribution of cultural know-how, which in our world often manifests itself in an uneven distribution of income and wealth.

Sowell cites many examples of societies in which the resentment of productive minorities has led to destructive economic policies, and in some cases even violence. In Malaysia, the ruling party has long backed policies designed to close the economic gap between the country's Malay majority and its prosperous Chinese-origin minority. Rather than celebrate the achievements of the Chinese community, and the wealth it has created, Malay politicians have imposed rigid racial preferences that disadvantage students, professionals, and entrepreneurs of Chinese descent. Not surprisingly, these policies have driven large numbers of ambitious Chinese Malaysians to emigrate. This brain drain may well have mitigated inequality, as at least some capable

Chinese Malaysians are making their fortunes in Singapore or Canada rather than at home. But of course this also means that Malay politicians are no longer able to tax these Chinese-origin émigrés to finance their various pet projects.

If these policies are so irrational, why do societies so often pursue them? Sowell argues that while hostility to productive minorities might be foolish from the perspective of the society as a whole, it makes a great deal of sense from the perspective of those who lead the groups that have fallen behind. If productive minorities were held in high esteem, the members of other groups might seek to emulate them by adopting their cultural practices. By encouraging the members of lagging groups to resent the members of more advanced groups, the leaders of lagging groups reduce the risk that members of lagging groups will embrace the culture of more advanced groups, and in the process abandon their leaders. Though it is hard to imagine Malays abandoning their culture en masse to mimic that of their Chinese neighbors, a subtler diffusion of norms and values is much easier to envision. Throughout history, diaspora minorities have been the conduits through which new ideas, from political ideologies to managerial techniques, have spread from one part of the world to another. Nevertheless, the minorities that serve this vanguard role often find themselves despised.

As *Wealth, Poverty and Politics* comes to a close, Sowell focuses his attention on

controversies closer to home. He has much to say about the persistence of black poverty in the United States, and the role that the welfare state has played in perpetuating it. African Americans are, according to Sowell, a lagging group that has been ill served by its leadership, not entirely unlike the Malays in Malaysia.

I can't say I agree with every aspect of Sowell's take on the contemporary American scene. For Sowell, the chief obstacles facing poor native-born blacks looking to better their lot are ghetto culture and a welfare-state ideology that rewards idleness. My own view is that many of the pathologies Sowell identifies can be explained at least in part by the failure of governments to protect African Americans from violence. For much of U.S. history, officialdom turned a blind eye to "black-on-black" violence, which in effect meant that predators routinely got away with murder and innocent victims knew they could not trust the state to protect them. People who live in fear are often less productive than those who live in peace.

Nevertheless, Sowell has done us a great service by placing our current controversies in international context. We may be thankful that the U.S. is not yet a society in which productive minorities are despised. One wonders whether this will still be the case a generation or two hence, when there is a very good chance that racial disparities in wealth and income will have grown even more pronounced than they are today. **NR**

LEAVES: THREE TANKAS

Fall comes. He watches
Their dying flames fill the eaves
And ground their splotches
In slow-browning, flattened sheaves:
Loss over which no one grieves.
*

Their coming down makes
The ground a cereal bowl
Of brown. Then light snow'll
Dust the leaves. Next day, he rakes
Piles of Sugar Frosted Flakes.
*

Their dank piles lie deep,
For brewing a potpourri.
Dropped from every tree,
Tannic leaves are left to steep
Till the rain turns them to tea.

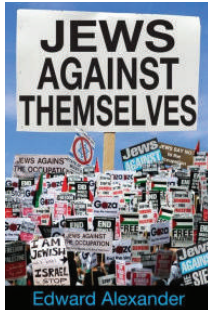
—LEN KRISAK



Text

A People Divided

DAVID PRYCE-JONES



Jews against Themselves, by Edward Alexander
(Transaction, 178 pp., \$24.95)

*To the man-in-the-street, who, I'm
sorry to say,
Is a keen observer of life,
The word intellectual suggests right
away
A man who's untrue to his wife.*

W. H. AUDEN could well have carried his lampoon further by pointing out that any intellectual these days is most likely to be untrue to his country, his compatriots, and their culture. It seems to come naturally to some characters to condemn what they are expected to praise, and praise what they are expected to condemn. Accordingly, the assumption takes root that Western societies are unjust at many a level, and that they do things much better somewhere else. One approved model used to be the Soviet Union, then it was Maoist China or Castro's Cuba, and there are even socialists now who look to the Venezuela of Hugo Chávez. A small but vociferous number of academics and littérateurs repeatedly put across some inner vision that possesses them, falsifying reality in the manner of artists.

The primary explanation of this phenomenon is snobbery. The works of a Gore Vidal, a Norman Mailer, a Harold Pinter, an Edward Said, and all their kind are exercises in superiority. To hold opinions about national politics and purposes contrary to those of everyone else seems like flattering evidence of being cleverer than the masses who can't think things

out for themselves and don't know they are being hoodwinked. In this mindset, doing harm is progressive and unpopularity is proof of courage.

A particular subsection of intellectuals comprises Jews who are engaged in a very old battle to define their identity. Scattered in many countries and living among Christians or Muslims, they were nonetheless always a nation, with a faith and languages and customs of their own. The obvious strategies for survival were to avoid drawing attention to themselves, to stay apart, to do whatever was asked by the powers that be, and finally to flee if persecution was threatening martyrdom.

Under compulsion, and occasionally of their own free will, some Jews converted to Christianity or Islam. Whether opportunists or cowards, a few apostates in the Middle Ages put themselves at the service of the persecutors. Their names, for instance Pablo Christiani and Petrus Alfonsi, are familiar only to specialists, but the damage they did—in effect, betrayal—was deep and lasting. Speaking with the apparent authenticity of insiders, they spread crude defamation and fantasies that Jewish men menstruated, bled Christian children to death for ritual ceremonies, poisoned wells (the well-known writer A. N. Wilson thinks they are still doing so), and controlled the world although visibly confined to miserably poor ghettos. To this day, imams are preaching in mosques and on television that Jews are the descendants of apes and pigs. The apostate Nicholas Donin, who became a Franciscan friar, is thought to have sent 3,000 Jews to their death (and to have driven 500 more to save themselves through baptism). Out of such careers emerged Torquemada and the Grand Inquisition.

This pattern of behavior repeats. Karl Marx defamed Jews as “hucksters,” a favorite word of his. He devised a socio-political scheme in which there would be no Jews at all: They would become internationalists. Soviet KGB Jews saved themselves by persecuting other Jews still attached to their heritage. In Hitler's Germany, Max Naumann ran an association that aimed to erase Jewish ethnic identity and replace it by complete assimilation to German ways. A Jewish classicist and professor at Kiel University, Felix Jacoby, boasted that he voted for

Hitler, adding, “Augustus is the only figure of world history whom one may compare to Adolf Hitler.” “Raus mit Uns,” or “Out with Us,” was the slogan coined with gallows humor by those in the community who could see these measures for what they were.

A professor of English literature at the University of Washington, Edward Alexander brings this story up to date in *Jews against Themselves*, a short and well-written polemic. Taking John Stuart Mill as his model social analyst, he makes his own commitment clear. The response to Nazi genocide is Zionism, a national-liberation movement that has been fulfilled beyond all expectations. Jews have a state of their own, and Alexander considers that this is “one of the most impressive assertions of the will to live that a martyred people has ever made.”

Every national movement defends itself as best it can, and Israel is no exception. More than once, Alexander observes that it is not Israeli occupation of Arab land that leads to Arab hatred of Israel, as detractors regularly say, but it is Arab hatred of Israel that leads to occupation. Time and again, nevertheless, Israel is expected to have a standard of behavior not required of anyone else, and one that would leave it defenseless. Still more unfairly, false moral equivalence is drawn between its defenses and the aggressions of its enemies. Anti-Semitism, wherever and whenever it breaks out, is not to be perceived as racist bigotry on the part of Christians or Muslims but as “a response to Jewish misbehavior.” In the hostile quasi-Marxist critique, Zionism is not a movement of national liberation, but a cover for pure and simple colonial conquest, a living injustice. And if Jews really are to blame for the aggressions of Arabs and Iranians, then they deserve the boycotts and sanctions and divestment now generating animus with a spread and an intensity not seen these many years since the end of World War II.

With alarming insistence, the Islamist regime in Tehran and its proxy Hezbollah in Lebanon keep promising to wipe Israel off the map, and they are developing the means to that end. The Palestinians of Fatah and Hamas maintain steady programs of carefully calibrated violence. The European Union knowingly allows grants and subsidies to finish up in the hands of terrorists. Hardly



a week goes past without the United Nations or one of its committees passing a resolution against Israel.

What provokes Alexander and brings an edge of scorn into his prose is that the existence of Israel means that everything is different but the danger to Jews is the same. At the beginning of the last world war there were 14 million Jews, and it has taken till the present to regain that number. Half of them live in Israel. How is it possible, this book asks, for Jewish intellectuals not only to live under the shadow of a second genocide but to furnish arguments that prepare for it?

Jews who take a strong and public position against Israel are putting themselves in the same position as those apostates in the Middle Ages. They, too, seemingly talk with inside knowledge. Among them, the currency speculator George Soros, the linguist Noam Chomsky, and Richard Falk, a United Nations bureaucrat, are public figures, but here again only someone with a special interest in the fate of Jews will have heard of the minor academics and journalists in their wake. Here is one Michael Lerner, who earned the sobriquet of Mrs. Clinton's "Rasputin," and who could write, "The Jewish community is racist, internally corrupt, and an apologist for the worst aspects of American capitalism and imperialism." In Israel itself, current intellectual theorizing posits that nationalism has been outgrown and exposed as retrograde. *Ha'aretz*, the quality daily newspaper in Tel Aviv, is more like a political party opposed to Zionism than a news outlet. In his discussion of an Israeli political geographer by the name of Oren Yiftachel, Alexander notes that "The other country, right or wrong" will serve as today's motto for this individual and every other post-Zionist as well.

Granted their history, Jews have every reason to think through the demands of identity. Superficially, it is plausible that the men and women who so provoke Alexander are acting out of self-hatred. In one chapter, he catches up with the British novelist Howard Jacobson, the first to break psychological ground by describing Jews as proud to be ashamed. It's a peculiar form of snobbery to think that losing is really a form of winning. Alexander is not asking for a tribal closing of the ranks, merely for common humanity; in the testing years ahead, a lot of it will be needed. **NR**

The Power Of Words Unspoken

DAVID DEAVEL

A COUPLE of decades ago, in 1995, Penelope Fitzgerald published her ninth and final short novel. Though she had been shortlisted for the Booker Prize with *The Bookshop* (1978) and had won it for *Offshore* (1979), many English critics had treated her victories as flukes, perhaps out of dismay that a woman whose first novel was published when she was 61 should be welcomed to the club. Or perhaps because

haps all of these and more. But with *The Blue Flower*, Fitzgerald was recognized in Britain and then in America. The novel came to our shores in 1997 and won the National Book Critics Circle Award. She was a star.

That star, whom A. S. Byatt later thought the greatest novelist of her generation, was nearly 80 years old and known as "Mops" to friends and family. *The Blue Flower*, which made her an international sensation, was about the obsessive love and desire for happiness the 18th-century German romantic poet Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg) focused on his dull, shallow, pleasure-loving, tubercular, teenage fiancée. Relentless in its detail of 18th-century Germany, giving us bureaucratic and technical aspects of salt mines, life in a German university (Jena, where Kant and Fichte made their reputations), and laundry in large houses, it brought to



she had been pre-categorized as another female who wrote short novels à la Barbara Pym. Or because she was personally evasive in public, giving the impression that she was a dim, absent-minded grandmother. Or maybe because her novels were themselves so hard to define—"tragic comedies" she called them. Per-

Mr. Deavel teaches in the department of Catholic studies at the University of St. Thomas.

life in crystalline form gigantic themes that populate all her works: overpowering desire, the extraordinary revealed in the ordinary, disappointment, and perseverance. And though the plot centered on the brilliant young poet, it was equally about other members of the poet's family and his circle of friends. Its emotional weight settles in the end on "the Mandelsloh," a young woman who loves Hardenberg and is better suited to him, but who knows

reality better than to think he will return her love. “But time given to wishing for what can’t be is not only spent, but wasted, and for all that waste we shall be accountable.” It was a theme the author knew well from her own life.

Penelope Mary Knox Fitzgerald (1916–2000) was the daughter of Edmund “Evoe” Knox, who edited *Punch* for many years, and Christina Hicks, both children of Anglican bishops. Though she was close to both sides of her family, the Knoxes, with their high achievement and eccentricity, defined her. I was introduced to her through *The Knox Brothers*, her 1977 group biography of her father and uncles. A codebreaker trained in classics and papyrology, Dillwyn decoded the famous Zimmermann Telegram, thus bringing the U.S. into World War I. He also helped crack the Enigma machine’s codes, used by Italy and Germany during World War II. Though he died in 1943, much of the intelligence he gathered would prove useful on D-Day. Wilfred was a New Testament scholar and a member of an Anglican religious order. And Ronald was the famous Catholic-convert priest, single-handed translator of the Bible, and mystery novelist. (Their sister Winifred Peck was also a novelist but was not featured prominently in the book.)

When her mother died young, Penelope’s father remarried Mary Shepard, the daughter of *Winnie-the-Pooh* illustrator Ernest Shepard. Shepard never forgave his 55-year-old *Punch* editor for marrying his 27-year-old daughter, but Penelope loved Mary and treated her as an older sister. Penelope studied at Oxford, then did some reviews and other pieces for her father and worked for the BBC during World War II, the latter experience providing her the setting for her novel *Human Voices* (1980). After the war, she married Desmond Fitzgerald, a dashing and literary young Irish soldier who had traveled in the circles of Robert Conquest at Oxford. The war broke Desmond, however: He would struggle with alcoholism for the rest of his life and never be able to provide for the family, even spending time in jail for forging checks and stealing from colleagues at his law firm.

Desmond and Mops co-edited a literary magazine called “World Review” in the early 1960s, publishing important European writers as well as Americans such as Bernard Malamud and Norman Mailer, but it’s not clear how much work Des-

mond did. Penelope’s need to keep the family afloat financially through teaching and editing prevented her from beginning her own serious writing career till her first book at 58—a biography of Victorian artist Edward Burne-Jones—and her first novel at 61.

When I first picked up her novels, I thought she would be a female English domestic novelist in the tradition of Austen, to whom she was sometimes compared. She really writes, as Byatt put it, European fables. A lifelong lover of the Russian novelists, Fitzgerald was—according to her biographer, Hermione Lee—more like Turgenev than like Barbara Pym. Her plots, though often domestic, were meant to evoke the strangeness of life. They include hints of mythical backstories and, occasionally, appearances of the supernatural, as in *The Bookshop*, about a woman who moves to rural England and starts a bookstore that is plagued by a ghost. Conservatives will note that the ghost’s opposition is not as strong a factor in her downfall as is the economic and social opposition of various townspeople, channeled through the regulatory state’s maze, to an upstart entrepreneur.

This brings us to another un-Austenian aspect of Fitzgerald’s work. If she had written *Pride and Prejudice*, Mary Bennet and Charlotte Collins would have been front and center. Fitzgerald’s focus is on what she called “exterminates,” or those who are in some sense fated to be among life’s losers but who nevertheless do not give up. Her novel *Innocence* (1986), set in 1950s Italy, has a main character, newly and unhappily married, exclaim at the end of the book, “We can’t go on like this.” The response of his wife’s phlegmatic cousin is pure Fitzgerald: “Yes, we can go on like this. . . . We can go on exactly like this for the rest of our lives.”

This was probably her vision of her own marriage. *Offshore* dealt with perhaps the lowest time in her life with Desmond, when the houseboat they lived on sank in the Thames, in 1963. Because her husband was largely drunk and useless, she arranged for them to live in a homeless shelter as she looked for a new place to stay. Around this time, she stopped sleeping with her husband, but she did not leave him or treat him badly in other ways. Her collected letters, *So I Have Thought of You* (2008), betray no bitterness or secrets. She did not complain out loud and she kept the

secrets of her life and marriage. In the areas of resignation and perseverance, she practiced what she novelized.

While she mined her own experiences for such books as *Offshore*, *The Bookshop*, and *Human Voices*, she was remarkable for her ability to evoke other places and times. Whether she was writing based on her life or not, her work is very pointed because she situates her stories in times of historical transition. *Human Voices* recalls her own experience as a young single woman at the BBC during World War II. *The Gate of Angels* (1990) is about love and belief in 1912 Cambridge as physics reshaped views of the world. *The Beginning of Spring* is set in Moscow as the Revolution is about to start and the expatriate English-merchant community is about to end. In all of these, the feeling of exile and displacement is not just geographic but historical.

The passage of time, and the changes it wreaks on a place, heightens the dramas of personal relationships. Almost all of her novels deal at the deepest level with the yearning for love, for intimacy, for beauty and happiness that is beyond reach, symbolized very effectively by Novalis’s absorbing thought of the blue flower.

This yearning for what must be finally and fully reserved for the eschaton is what ultimately makes Fitzgerald’s writing so fine and emotionally taut. The yearning is always communicated through dramatic understatement and economy. This author was a master of the unsaid, the almost-said, and even the said-in-another-language. Frank Reid, the protagonist in *The Beginning of Spring*, has been abandoned by his wife. He hires as a nanny, and falls in love with, a young peasant who speaks no English. At a critical moment, he says, in English, not Russian, “Stay here, I’m in love with you.” We do not know whether Lisa understands, and Frank never says it in Russian to ensure that she does. Because of his failure to speak, we sense his loss more deeply when Lisa leaves. The poet Marianne Moore’s intuition was that “the deepest feeling always shows itself; / not in silence, but restraint.” Fitzgerald agreed. Her characters retain their sense of rightful mystery. They let deep call to deep in silence, a call often unrequited. Like the Bible, whose dramatic gaps in narrative and detail power our interest, Fitzgerald’s work is a revelation, late in time and needful for an age of oversharing and despair.

NR

Film

Terrible Beauty

ROSS DOUTHAT

LEONARDO DiCAPRIO is 40. Let that sink in.

No, it's even worse than that: He's 41. Yet the cheeks are still smooth, the boyishness still palpable, the eternal youthfulness still a defining feature of his presence on the screen.

And his career remains divided between parts that accept this reality and seek to capitalize on it and parts that bury his Dorian Grayishness under beards or makeup or just a manly scowl—parts in which he tries, in a literal sense, to *act* his age.

Mostly the first set of parts are better. (To pick the most recent examples, the criminal man-child Jordan Belfort in Scorsese's *The Wolf of Wall Street* and the title role in Baz Luhrmann's *Gatsby* were both great roles for Leo; his attempt to embody J. Edgar Hoover for Clint Eastwood was not.)

But the attempts at toughness are likely to continue; time's arrow is in flight, and you can't keep playing 30-year-olds at 50. And so this winter DiCaprio has taken it to extremes: In *The Revenant*, Alejandro González Iñárritu's Old West survival epic, he buries his beauty not only under a beard, a pelt of hair, and a revenger's grimace, but under the claws and teeth and body of a grizzly bear.

The bear attack catches DiCaprio's character, Hugh Glass, when he's trying to guide a team of soldiers and fur traders back from an earlier ambush, at the hands of Ree Indians, in the wintry high plains of 1832. He's savaged and mauled and seems certain to die, and the party's commanding officer, Andrew Henry (Domhnall Gleeson), orders three of the men to stay behind with Glass, let him die as peacefully as possible, and then give him a Christian burial.

One of the men is Glass's son, a half-Indian boy named Hawk; another, unfortunately for all concerned, is the growling, self-interested Fitzgerald (Tom Hardy), who can possibly be forgiven an outsize anxiety about Indians given that he's



Leonardo DiCaprio in *The Revenant*

missing half his scalp. Soon enough the boy has been knifed, Glass has been tossed, still breathing, into a shallow grave, and Fitzgerald is headed back to what passes for civilization.

But the grave cannot hold our trapper, and neither can the winter bar him from his avenging course.

Visually, *The Revenant* is a staggering achievement. In his earlier English-language melodramas, *21 Grams* and *Babel*, González Iñárritu tended to over-aestheticize tales of fated tragedy. But here the backdrop more than justifies his attention to detail, his zeal for the perfect frame and touch. The grandeur of the West, the pitiless, blue-cold beauty of ice and fir and snow, has rarely had a better cinematic treatment.

And for a while the story matches the scenery. The opening ambush is a brutal, blistering set piece; the bear attack is basically everything that Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man* couldn't show given hairy, churning life; and the villain, Fitzgerald, has a twitchy greediness for our attention.

But once Fitzgerald's schemes give way to Glass's odyssey, the characters are separated from one another. The man-versus-nature showdown comes to the fore, and the movie becomes something beautiful to look at without a narrative to match. The screenplay has a lot of moving pieces: Along with Glass, Fitzgerald, and the larger party they're both separated from, it throws in a group of Indians looking for a missing daughter (a kind of mirror-image version of *The Searchers*)

and a gang of sinister French fur traders, as well as a wave of flashbacks, dream sequences, and hallucinations, many of them scored by ghostly murmuring from Glass's dead Indian wife.

But there's too much pretentious matter, not enough true art, and the film ends up trapped somewhere between Terrence Malick and Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*: Its revenge drama is too weighed down by capital-M Meaningfulness to have the propulsive force it needs, and its meditations on nature, God, and man's inhumanity to man aren't interesting enough to justify their recurrence or longueurs.

Which doesn't make *The Revenant* a failure; it's still staggeringly beautiful, still remarkable in patches even if the whole doesn't quite congeal. And of DiCaprio's various gritty, grown-up performances I'd say this is the best: His face looks genuinely ragged, snow-encrusted like the landscape, and the bulk of furs and weapons makes you forget the boyish body underneath.

I'm not sure it's a *great* performance, and if it wins him his first Oscar, that will be a little silly in the way that first Oscars for famous actors often are. Hardy is better, more vivid, and even Gleeson's officer has a hint of a more complicated psychology than the single-minded Glass. But this is more the movie's fault than Leo's; he's doing his part, and it's not his fault that *The Revenant* has less to show us about the human condition than it does about the terrible beauty of the West. **NR**



Text

Sweet '16

UNFORTUNATELY, it's 2016. This will be a year of great portent. Our nation seems joined in an epic arm-wrestling match to determine what our institutions, norms, and pronouns will look like for the next generation, and I'm pretty sure this is what it was like to live in the '60s before it was THE SIXTIES.

We also have a ~~chancellor~~ ~~imperator~~ ~~death~~ president to pick. In 1968, the "silent majority" elected Richard Milhous Nixon. In 2016, there is a non-zero chance we'll elect a 70-year-old man with his own line of luxury meats.

In other words, fear not, Rich Lowry, there is plenty of time for me to write my usual dread-fueled cogitations on decline. ("You know it's called 'Happy Warrior,' right, Dan?"—Jonah's Couch)

But for now, I thought it'd be fun to share with you some of my New Year resolutions.

Watch more college football. It's hard for me to get really into college football unless I'm watching it with my bookie. That's because my *almae matres* are the utterly pigskinless George Washington, New York, and Oxford universities—nary a man at any could execute a competent nickel blitz. I have long rooted for Notre Dame out of tribal Catholic affinity and a deep love for the films of Sean Astin, but I never really got emotionally involved in the way I am with my accursed Jets and the NFL. And yet I very much enjoyed bowl season this year and find the playoff structure more compelling than the previous BCS iterations. There are still *way* too many bowl games, though. As the Bard of Avon wrote:

And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us at the Buffalo Wild Wings Citrus
Bowl.

Stop following Neil deGrasse Tyson on Twitter. You've all read Charlie Cooke's genre pieces on this astrophysicist-slash-worst-guy-at-the-Christmas-party, right? Exhibit 297-B of why everyone hates him is this stale, hair-covered sticky bun of a tweet from New Year's Eve: "To all those who reckon time on the Gregorian Calendar - Happy New Year! (FYI: January 1 is astronomically insignificant.)"

You're astronomically insignificant, Neil!

Actually, this tweet reveals something more than Tyson's commitment to being That Guy. For one thing, it's a category error. To say that a date is *astronomically* insignificant misses the point about the sort of thing a

date is. January 1 is deeply significant to all kinds of people for all kinds of reasons, and this habit of subordinating whole magisteria of human experience and invention to a positivism as joyless as it is austere reveals the very limited utility of scientism as a worldview. It's also just dumb. There's nothing mathematically significant about the base-10 number system and nothing linguistically significant about the letter "A," either, but hey, you gotta start somewhere. In fact, science is festooned with measurements and methodologies that begin with essentially arbitrary decisions but that nevertheless give us the inter-subjective vocabulary necessary to render the natural world sensible.

And, seriously, just don't be That Guy.

Get a handgun. This one's tricky. See, I, like many other Americans, watched the president's teary-eyed announcement of new imperial action on "gun control" and wondered in the back of my mind whether I had better get strapped while the getting strapped is good. The trick is that, for reasons that have never been made clear, I live in the District of Columbia. And here, the Second Amendment effectively doesn't exist. In fact, when I ordered a cheapo rubber-BB gun in the style of a Colt 1911 as part of my award-winning Walter Sobchak—from-*The Big Lebowski* Halloween costume, Amazon informed me that they could not ship this bauble to my D.C. address. Whereupon I found out it is straight up *illegal* here. And a good thing, too. Once they passed the air-pistol ban, things finally turned around for This Town, I tell you.

Oh, but yes, the Obama presser. The president had this hoot of a line during it: "This is not that complicated. The reason Congress blocks laws is they want to win elections." Well, if that don't beat all! These yellow-bellies are voting their districts!

It did call to mind the stark differences between the legal apparatuses around gun rights and those around abortion. Abortion is decidedly *not* an enumerated right; gun ownership decidedly *is* (with debates over semantics, to be sure). And yet on abortion the federal government takes its post-incorporation duties seriously, protecting and expanding access to a "right" that states would otherwise restrict, while on gun rights the federal government has, especially in recent years, been in the business of restricting a right that the states would otherwise like to protect. This is true of the executive, and true even of the judiciary in the sense that D.C. and Chicago's defiance of *Heller* and other decisions continues unabated.

It seems to me that a central government in the business of imposing "rights" hidden in "emanating penumbras" and restricting rights spelled out in plain English is rotting from the core and cannot be long—

Oh, right, *Happy Warrior*.

I also want to finally try kale!

NR

Mr. Foster is a political consultant and a former news editor of NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE.

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